



Wyong
Shire
Council
CENTRAL COAST

Wyong Shire Council



State of the Shire
2009-10



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Wyong Shire Council



Introduction
2009-10

Introduction

This State of the Shire report is part of Council's integrated planning framework. It provides an assessment of the social, economic and environmental state of the Shire.

The State of the Shire report is part of the feedback loop to assess whether our community is moving towards its 20-year vision, as outlined in the Shire Strategic Vision adopted in September 2009.

Structure of the Report

The report is presented in four main chapters representing the quadruple bottom line of:

- People
- Assets
- Environment
- Governance

Within each chapter there is a section devoted to each issue. Each section is presented under the following headings:

At a Glance – An overview of the issue and the current state

Wyong Shire at a Glance

Population (ABS Estimate for June 2009):	149,382
Total LGA Area:	820km ² (82,042ha)
Parks and Reserves (National Parks, State Reserves & the like):	3,000ha
Coastline:	35km
Lakes:	3 Lakes (79.6km ² in area)
Shire Residents participating in the Workforce (March 2010):	66,362 persons
Top three employment industries:	retail, health care & social assistance, manufacturing
Unemployment Rate (March 2010):	8.8%
Median Weekly Individual Income (2006):	\$381 per week
Proportion of employed Shire Residents commuting (outside of the Shire):	32.7%
Number of Ourimbah Campus enrolments (2009):	3,880 students
Number of TAFE Students (Central Coast) (2009):	12,308 students
Number of hospitals:	1 public; 1 private
Local Roads: 1,001km (sealed);	100km (unsealed)
Number of community/neighbourhood centres:	16
Number of families (2006):	38,036
Number of vacant residential lots (2009):	1,398
Tourism (Central Coast): visitor nights/annum:	3.4 nights in the region;
Annual Council Budget (2009/10);	\$403,841,000
Number of national sporting teams:	1 (Central Coast Mariners)

Current State

Assessment of the issue (as declining, stable or improving)

Key Drivers

The pressures impacting the issue.

Response

What is being done to address the issue/drivers

Future Trends

Assessment of the likely state of the issue given the response (as declining, stable or improving)

References

Additional information sources on the issue.

Wyong Shire Council



Sustainability in Action
2009-10

Sustainability in Action

Sustainability is best defined as "meeting the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Ultimately, it is about doing things better and improving our environment, our society and our economies (Potts). This is what we are aspiring to.

Council has a pivotal role to play in protecting the things and places our community values, providing essential services and helping shape our way of living, for now and for future generations. We are committed to creating and supporting a culture of sustainability in Council and the community.

Sustainability is not just about the environment. It is about considering environmental, social and economic implications of what we do, applying this knowledge to the advice we provide, the decisions we make and the actions we take. We need to make sure these decisions and actions help achieve the sustainable future our community, our economy and our environment deserves. Ultimately, we are investing in our children's futures.

Council has adopted a set of six key sustainability principles. These have been created by staff with community input and are a key part of Council's endeavour to improve sustainability across our organisation and within our community.

The Sustainability Principles are:

1. We successfully integrate ecological, social and economic sustainability
2. We support our long-term vision, focusing locally in a global context
3. We protect the environment to maintain healthy ecological systems
4. We apply good governance, striving to improve our processes and outcomes
5. We build partnerships by engaging with and listening to the community
6. We lead by example and support actions for sustainability

The Shire Strategic Vision is a plan for the whole community's future. In it the community adopted the six sustainability principles as key principles for its future vision. The Strategic Vision poses the following questions:

"Do we, as a community, want to continue to do the same things in the future for similar results ... or are we going to set our priorities to get what will really improve and really matter to our quality of life ... and at the same time be prepared to proactively respond to changes and challenges as they unfold?"

In other words, will we be proud of the legacy we leave for our children and future generations?

Sustainability is everyone's responsibility. However, Council has a leadership role in helping improve our understanding of sustainability and to provide good examples of how to act more sustainably, and inspire others to do likewise.

The organisational performance of Council is pivotal in setting a good example for the rest of the community. This means that current practices should not lead to a reduction in environmental, economic and social values, and should enhance the total quality of life now and into the future.

In December 2009, Council was awarded the Local Sustainability Award for its activities in 2008-09. This prestigious award recognises outstanding achievement by a NSW local government Council in the last 12 months to implement Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and strive for a sustainable future for their local community.

In the past year, Council has taken further steps to becoming a more sustainable organisation. These include (but are not limited to):

- installation of solar panels on three Council buildings
- hybrid Camry vehicles included into Council's fleet
- becoming a partner Council in the Fridge Buy Back program
- monitoring of staff computers to ensure they are not left on over night. Internet access computers are automatically switched off over night
- Council's new style guide including sustainability provisions for paper and ink types
- Council letterhead printed on 100% recycled, Australian made paper, including a new double sided version to reduce paper usage
- e-waste collections introduced for the Wyong Shire community (two held in 2009-10)
- discontinuation of providing bottled water used in Council meetings and in the Council's function room
- commencement of the CEE change program (Community Education & Engagement) – a sustainability education and engagement project for Council staff to ensure Council is leading by example
- commitment to green power by increasing its use to 50% for the Wyong Civic Centre for the 2009-10 financial year
- introduction of an estuary education program for the Wyong Shire community
- replacement of inefficient air conditioning equipment at Wyong Civic Centre using funding from the Waste & Sustainability Improvement Program
- ongoing work of the internal Sustainability Team. Achievements are cross organisational and include:
 - inclusion of sustainability principles into all new position descriptions
 - trial of recycled plastic for seating as part of the Estuary Management Plan
 - trial of recycled plastic star pickets for fencing
 - screensavers showing the sustainability principles implemented across Council's computers for one month
 - draft 'How to guide' for sustainability completed
 - travel mugs supplied to all Council staff to reduce the usage of single use cups and mugs
 - trial of more sustainable toilet paper options within Council's administration building and public facilities

- staff 'Swap Party' held to encourage recycling of unwanted household goods
- trial and adoption of chemical free cleaning products for Council buildings and an extension of chemical free cleaning in Council child care centres
- sustainable procurement training for a selection of targeted staff
- technology trials for Lifeguards and Rangers reports
- use of better grade timbers in projects to decrease maintenance costs and the amount of timber used
- electronic mapping of saltmarsh communities to ensure areas are not mown during maintenance
- Council e-waste disposed of during e-waste collection to ensure recycling of materials
- sustainability principles displayed in all meeting rooms within the Civic Centre and printed on purchase requisition books to serve as a reminder when purchasing
- sustainability category included in annual staff Christmas decorations competition.

In addition, Council has continued its:

- commitment to purchasing green power (25% for Council buildings other than the Civic Centre; 10% for waste and water),
- commitment to Greenfleet to offset all fleet emissions,
- implementation of Council's updated vehicle policy to improve fleet efficiencies,
- commitment to applying the sustainability principles through strategic documents including the overarching Four-year Delivery Plan, Shire Strategic Vision and sectional Operational Plans,
- employment of the Environment Management Officer in the Shire Services Department improving ecological sustainability and coordinating environmental training,
- ongoing provision of chemical clean-up days (two per financial year) where the community can drop off unwanted chemicals for safe disposal,
- ongoing provision of mobile phone recycling stations at Customer Service locations,
- ongoing water and sustainability education programs – both formal and community based,
- other activities as described in the 2008-09 State of the Shire are also ongoing.

Wyong Shire's growth and its associated services and facilities continue to place pressure on our quality of life. This State of the Shire Report outlines the main changes and trends that

have occurred over the past year. While some improvements have been made, there is always more that can be done to improve the Shire's quality of life and in turn be more sustainable. It is about doing the best we can with the resources we have. Often it is the small steps that make a difference and form a key part of the journey towards long-term sustainability. As our focus on sustainability grows, we can, and must, make adjustments to our efforts and practices to achieve better outcomes and help to build a better future, today.

This State of the Shire Report forms part of that journey showing where we are at present.



Wyong Shire Council



People

2009-10

People

Population - growth and profile

Key socio-economic and demographic data from the 2006 Census and previous censuses provides us with a better understanding of our community and the social trends occurring in the Shire. This information informs planning and advocacy for both the current and future needs of the community.

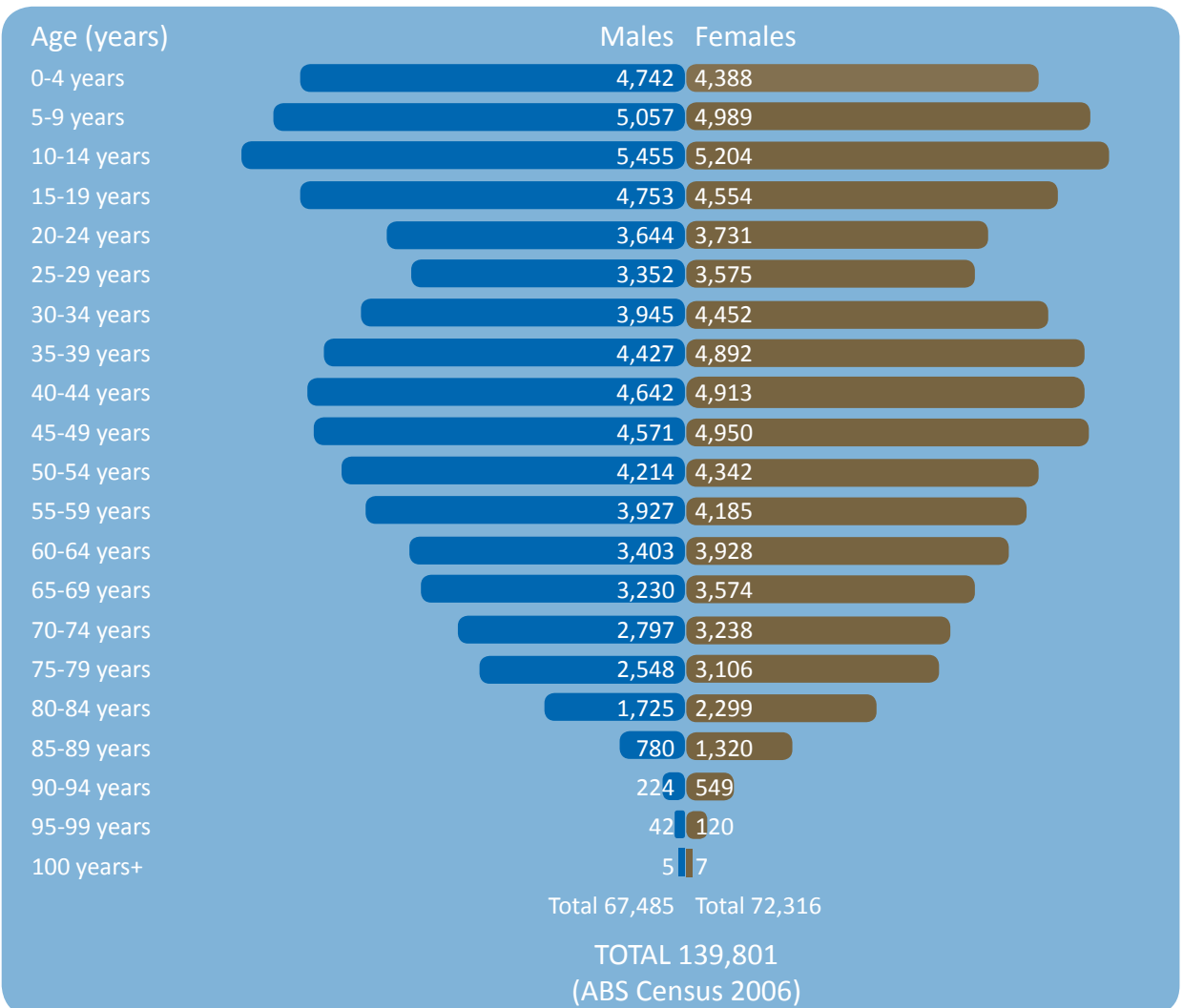
At A Glance

Over the past 25 years Wyong Shire has changed from a holiday and retirement area to an urban fringe area of Sydney. It currently has an estimated population of 149,382. While the Shire is still growing, the rate of growth has slowed since 1986. The following tables show this slowing and the population changes over time. Wyong has the 16th largest population out of 152 Local Government Areas in NSW. During 2008-09 it ranked 18th in terms of largest growth experienced during that year.

Estimated Resident Population 1996-2009

Year	Number	Change Number	Average Growth
2009p	149,382	2,793	1.9%
2008r	147,234	2,284	1.6%
2007r	144,305	1,619	1.1%
2006	142,686	1,225	0.8%
2005	141,461	1,024	0.7%
2004	140,437	982	0.7%
2003	139,445	1,750	1.2%
2002	137,705	2,207	1.6%
2001	135,498	3,258	2.5%
2000	132,240	3,503	2.7%
1999	128,737	2,917	2.3%
1998	125,820	2,778	2.3%
1997	123,042	2,857	2.4%
1996	120,185	-	-

Source: Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2008-09 (cat. no.3218.0)(2010) p - preliminary r- revised





The major component of the Shire’s change in population is through in-migration of people moving to the Shire from other areas. Those attracted to the Shire between 2001 and 2006 came mostly from Gosford, Blacktown, Lake Macquarie, Penrith and Warringah Local Government Areas.

The rate of in-migration is influenced by a number of factors – the overall rate of immigration to Australia (that still predominately settles in Sydney pushing further growth to the outer fringes), housing prices relative to prices in the greater Sydney area and perceived lifestyle.

Many residents moved to the area because of the lifestyle; the relative affordability; to be closer to family and friends; and the environmental features (beaches, lakes, bushland and visual amenity). Wyong is seen as a better place to bring up children; they were already familiar with the area as they had holidayed here as a child; it is quiet, relaxed and laid back; and is more community focused with a good community feel. (Community Plan 2008).

Wyong and Gosford City’s population projections are shown in the table below. According to these figures Wyong will overtake Gosford within the next 12 years. Wyong’s population is expected to increase by 20,170 people to 162,856 in the short-to-medium term, at an average growth rate of 1.4%. The most significant increase in population is expected in the Warnervale-Wadalba Social Planning District (SPD).

The age profile of Wyong Shire compared to NSW shows that there was a larger proportion of people in the 0-17 age groups (25.7%) as well as in the over 60 age groups (23.3%) compared with 24% and 18.6% respectively for NSW. This reflects the areas popularity with families and retirees.



Estimated Resident Population at 30 June

LGA	1996	2001	2006	Change 1996- 2001	Change 2001- 2006	State Ranking 2001-2006	
						Fastest Growth	Largest Growth
Wyong	120,185	135,498	142,686	15,313 2.4%	7,188 1.0%	33	8
Gosford	150,220	160,760	162,058	10,540 1.4%	1,298 0.2%	76	49
NSW	6,204,728	6,575,217	6,816,087	370,489 1.2%	240,870 0.7%	-	-

Source: ABS ERP Regional Population Growth Australia Cat. No 3218.0 (2009)

Population Projections

Year	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031
WSC	150,338	162,856	175,264	187,624	200,015
Gosford	170,090	174,783	180,384	186,645	193,432

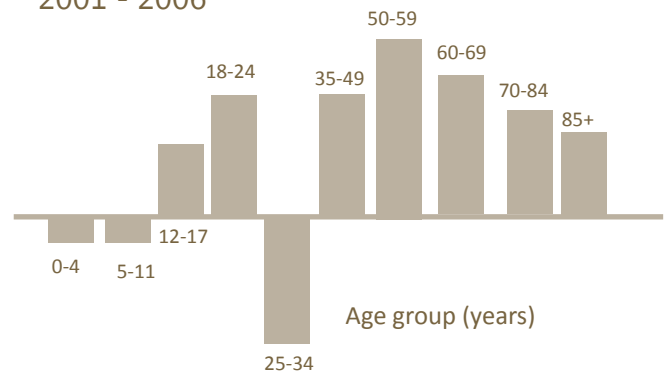
Source: Wyong and Gosford Council websites (.id Consulting, 2010)

Changes in the age structure from 2001 - 2006 are shown in the graph over to the right. The 0-4 and 5-11 age groups are experiencing a decline in numbers while there has been an increase in young people 12-24 years, in particular the 18-24 year age group. Out-migration continues to occur in the 25-34 age group.

In 2006 there were:

- 3,800 or 2.8% Indigenous people in the Shire, an increase of 1,235 persons (48%) since 2001. This increase is likely to be a combination of population growth and an increase in persons identifying themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and improved data collection by the ABS,
- a small proportion of people born overseas (11.9%) and a small proportion (4.3%) of people from non-English speaking backgrounds who come from a number of different countries,
- 38,035 families in Wyong Shire; of which 41.1% were couple families with child(ren) (NSW 46.2%), 38.1% were couple families without children (NSW 36%) and 19.6% were one parent families (NSW 16.1%). From 2001 to 2006 the largest changes in family types have been couples without child(ren) (+799), couples with child(ren) over 15 years (+585), one parent families with child(ren) over 15 years (+502) and one parent families with child(ren) 15 years and under (+322),
- 25.2% of households are lone persons (NSW 23.4%),
- 49.3% of persons aged 15+ years married, 28.6% never married, 14.1% separated or divorced (NSW 11%) and 8.0% widowed (NSW 6.2%). The latter reflects the older

Change in age structure of \Wyong Shire, 2001 - 2006



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 and 2001

age profile.

The Community Profile shows a range of ages and family types living in the Shire ranging from families with young children to older residents. There is also significant socio – economic diversity with newer areas likely to be more affluent and have a younger age profile while a number of other areas are experiencing social stress.



Forecast Population by Social Planning District	2006	2016	2031	Number	Average annual change
Wyong Shire	142,672	162,841	200,002	57,330	+1.4%
Gorokan SPD	19,049	20,628	23,421	4,372	+0.8%
Northern Lakes SPD	14,685	15,268	17,456	2,771	+0.7%
Ourimbah-Rural South SPD	4,411	4,472	4,931	520	0.4%
Rural West SPD	1,795	1,827	2,010	215	0.5%
San Remo-Budgewoi SPD	19,697	20,898	22,958	3,261	0.6%
Southern Lakes SPD	24,979	25,305	26,312	1,333	0.2%
The Entrance SPD	23,770	28,289	34,227	10,457	1.5%
Toukley SPD	9,112	9,655	12,720	3,608	1.3%
Warnervale-Wadalba SPD	10,908	20,781	34,625	23,717	4.7%
Wyong SPD	14,266	15,718	21,342	7,076	1.6%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 and 2001

Current State

Rating

Population Growth (rate of)

2009-2010

Increasing

Key Drivers

Major catalysts for population growth include:

- Australia's migration intake and growth of the Sydney Metropolitan Area,
- changes in transport infrastructure including the electrification of the railway and construction of the freeway to Sydney,
- the cost of home ownership pressures in Sydney,
- "relative" affordability of land and housing, and
- the attraction of a coastal lifestyle.

The Central Coast Regional Strategy (CCRS) (2006) proposes an additional 70,000 people and 45,000 jobs for Wyong Shire over the next 25 years. This includes 23,500 homes to be located in centres and urban areas and 16,000 new homes to be located in greenfield release areas. The rate of development will be influenced by tensions between the natural and built environment.

Response

Population growth and the tensions it is creating across social, economic and environmental areas is being managed strategically. While the Central Coast Regional Strategy (CCRS) sets targets for the growth of this area it remains uncertain whether Wyong Shire can fulfil them. Council is required to prepare a new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) by 2011. Part of that is the preparation of a Settlement Strategy which will consider issues related to Centres and Housing, Economy and Employment, Environment, Heritage, Recreation, Natural Resources, Natural Hazards, Water, Infrastructure and Transport.

The Settlement Strategy will also implement the actions identified by various State Government Plans, including the Central Coast Regional Strategy, 2008; Central Coast Regional Conservation Plan, and the Regional Economic Development and Employment Land Strategy.

A Community Profile for Wyong Shire is available as an interactive research tool on Council's website. The profile provides data from the 2006, 2001, 1996 and 1991 Censuses of Population and Housing for the Shire and 15 sub-areas.

Population and Household Forecasts for the Shire and 15 sub-areas are also available as an interactive tool on Council's website. The Population and Household Forecasts provide projected population, age and household forecasts to 2031, and are based on estimated resident population data for 2006 and latest information on land development, fertility rates and household structure trends.

Council's Community Plan (2008) reflects the key social challenges, opportunities and aspirations of the community. It is a guiding document for government, non-government agencies, community groups and the local community in relation to enhancing social and community outcomes and for working together to improve our Quality of Life (QoL). The reader of this report can refer to the Community Plan for details on many of the social and community aspects of the Shire. The Plan is available on Council's website or available from Council offices or libraries.

The Central Coast Quality of Life Project (CSIRO 2007, CCRF 2008) established seven life domains:

- standard of living,
- health,
- achievements in life,
- personal relationships,
- community connectedness,
- future security, and
- feelings of safety.

These are used to define, measure and monitor quality of life. The QoL Survey sourced information about residents' attitudes and perceptions, as well as residents' overall wellbeing. This information establishes a baseline of subjective quality of life data and is being used in a number of strategic areas of Council including the preparation of the Shire Strategic Vision. Over the longer term, the research will provide greater insight into the influences of quality of life and assist with the identification of issues that affect the way residents live in Wyong Shire. The next Quality of Life Survey will be conducted in 2011-12.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Population Growth

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Population Growth	Stable	Increasing	Increasing	Increasing

The importance of Wyong Shire as a residential destination for families and retirees from areas further south is expected to continue. As a result, there are significant pressures for residential expansion within the Shire from both existing residents and from people moving to the area. This places pressure on our economic, social and environmental sustainability. Continued growth unmatched by sufficient resources to address social, economic and environmental challenges will see residents, existing and new, face declines in the seven key life domains and the overall quality of life they currently enjoy.

If current trends continue, the Shire will continue to need to create significant numbers of new households. Up to now, land supply close to the coast has been generally abundant and affordable. However, if the declines in lots released and dwellings constructed continues supply will fall and prices will likely increase proportionately. This will have flow-on effects on

the cost of housing (purchase and rental) with subsequent social and economic effects for residents.

Significant new “Greenfield” opportunities have been identified in Woongarra, Hamlyn Terrace, Wadalba and Warnervale while The Entrance, Toukley and Wyong are expected to have growth in their town centres.

The more established areas are expected to experience a marginal net fall in the number of pre-schoolers as the population of many sub-areas ages over the next 15 years. However, this is expected to be offset by large gains in Warnervale-Wadalba as a result of new residential opportunities, attracting families and young couples.

All areas in the Shire are expected to have an increase in the early retiree and retiree age groups, consistent with both the ageing of the population and the amount of residential development expected. Almost all areas are expected to have an increase in the population aged 75+ reflecting the ageing of the population and in some areas an increase in aged care facilities. This will affect the way we plan and provide for housing types and tenure, associated infrastructure and services like transport, health and community facilities.

It is anticipated that the out-migration of 25-34 year olds will continue. Improving both the local workforce and lifestyle opportunities for this population group is important to retain or attract these people back to the Shire. Council has recently rezoned an area of land located adjacent the Sydney-Newcastle Freeway at the Sparks Road Interchange for the purposes of generating employment opportunities in the Shire. The site totals 744 hectares in size and is known as the Wyong Employment Zone. Of this, 340ha is proposed for development with the remainder zoned for environmental conservation and water management purposes. The area is able to facilitate approximately 6000 local jobs, and could generate a minimum of \$1.5 billion of investment in the Central Coast economy. The rezoning will encourage employment generating land use activities and may improve the capacity of the local workforce.

Most areas in Wyong Shire are expected to have an increase in the number of couples with children. Lone person households are forecast to increase in all areas. This needs to be taken into account in our planning and development of the Shire due to a current undersupply of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings.

With the continued in-migration of residents to the growth areas of the Shire it is expected that the Shire’s ethnic diversity will grow slowly.

In line with the national outlook, there is a national trend towards smaller household sizes, declining marriage rates, an increase in the number of divorces and an increase in the number of single older people. These national trends are expected to occur locally.

References

- Wyong Shire Community Profile (2008 - .id Consulting)
- Wyong Shire Population and Household Forecasts (update 2010)
- Quality of Life on the Central Coast: A Community Survey of Central Coast Residents (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008)
- Central Coast Regional Profile and Social Atlas (2004)
- NSW Government: Central Coast Regional Strategy (2008)
- Quality of Life on the Central Coast: A Community Survey of Central Coast Residents (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008)
- Wyong Shire Council ‘Wyong Employment Zone’ Fact Sheet May 2010



Community Connectedness and Participation

A sense of community and community spirit is a vital component of a healthy community. It encompasses elements such as image, spirit, character and pride, along with processes such as communication, inter-group relations, linking and connecting. Overall well-being and quality of life are linked to the ability of people to participate in community life and daily activities, feel connected and have a strong sense of place.

Social Capital is “the fabric that holds the community together”. It can be defined as “features of social organisation like networks, the quality and intensity of civic involvement, the level of trust and norms that exist between individuals and/or groups within a community, and which facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Robert Putnam).



“Much hard evidence has accumulated that civic engagement and social connectedness are practical preconditions for better schools, safer streets and even healthier and longer lives” (Robert Putnam). (Wyang Shire Community Plan, 2008)

At a Glance

As part of the Central Coast Quality of Life Survey (CCRF, 2008), data was collected for the Shire on the level of interaction with family, friends and neighbours as well as residents' connections with their neighbourhood and participation in community activities. This is reported throughout the Community Plan 2008.

The Plan's results illustrate the importance of interactions outside of the household to the quality of life of Central Coast residents. Often residents interacted with friends, family and neighbours and whether residents were able to talk to and obtain support from their circle of friends all had significant associations with well-being. While there appears to be a fairly high level of social interaction in the Central Coast this connectivity does not necessarily involve neighbours and those living close by.

Neighbourhoods are the most immediate interface between residents and the wider community and play an important role in resident's perceptions about their community. The QoL survey found that 56 per cent of Wyong residents agreed or strongly agreed that their neighbourhood had a strong sense of community.

Residents in the Community Plan (2008) consultations acknowledged the importance of good neighbours and friendly people as the key to feeling like a part of their community and feeling like they belong. This was considered important given that many people moving to the Shire are moving away from their families, friends and other support networks. As both traditional family structures change and the number of people living alone and outside couple relationships increase these interactions are likely to become more important.

Residents expressed the importance of welcoming new residents to the Shire and the need for casual and formal opportunities for people to come together to meet, connect and link. This could be in the form of small and large events and the provision of “local” places and spaces within neighbourhoods to bring people together and build a sense of community pride and identity.

Residents also acknowledged the importance of getting involved in existing groups and networks as another way they have connected and linked with others. Approximately 28% of Wyong residents did some volunteer work. Volunteering was found to have a significant and positive association with wellbeing. The highest proportions of volunteers were aged 65 and over.

Current State

Rating

Community Connectedness

2009-2010

Stable



Key Drivers

- The provision of “local” places and spaces within neighbourhoods that provide opportunities for casual and formal gathering, connecting and linkages at the neighbourhood level, e.g. communities facilities, parks, public domains,
- work – life balance,
- level of commuting,
- access to transport,
- Wyong’s demographics (e.g. Age profile, income & education level),
- capacity to participate and willingness to participate, and
- opportunities to get involved in existing groups and networks.

Response

Ref 2009-10 Strategic Program

Progress

1.1.1.1 Continue implementation of the Community Plan (2008)

Implementation is ongoing across the 5 year life of the plan. Projects undertaken during 2009-10 include:

Development of the Youth Engagement Strategy, On-Road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy and Graffiti Management Strategy; commencement of Community Engagement Strategy; development of draft guidelines for the Community Matching Fund; Design and approval of Hamlyn Terrace Community Centre and Sporting Facility; Together for Toukley partnership project with Greater Toukley Vision; Better Futures funded youth music events and workshops at PCYC, Oasis, Toukley, San Remo, Gravity and Lake Munmorah; Community Facilities Forum providing advice on how to run events, Council’s grant application process and the utilisation/ availability of Council’s community facilities. Commencement of a pilot Neighbourhood Connections Project at Tacoma; Commencement of The Entrance Community Café at The Entrance Community Centre with an initial partnership with Breakthru who will operate the café as a training platform for hospitality students; establishment and promotion of the The Entrance Exhibition Art Gallery; Reinstallation of community art at Watanobbi; Co-ordination of activities for Senior’s Week, Youth Week, Harmony Day, International Women’s Day, Warnervale Fair, National Reconciliation Week.

1.1.1.2 Complete the Wyong Shire Youth Strategy

The Draft Youth Strategy was completed and publicly exhibited for 6 weeks during May and June 2010. The Strategy is a culmination of an extensive research and community engagement process incorporating feedback from young people, service providers, business and community groups and current best practice.

1.2.2.1 Facilitate local area projects that build community pride.

Community Development activities have been undertaken including: Movies Under the Stars, school holiday activities, community art projects, Together for Toukley family event, 3 on 3 vibe festival, drumming festival, Welcome Tours, Dancing in the Street, and the Mannering Park community pride project was finalised.

1.2.2.2 Establish a framework for a Neighbourhood Matching Fund Program

The Draft guidelines have been developed and staff training was undertaken in June 2010. A presentation was given by Mr Jim Diers (Matching fund expert) to key stakeholders (Council and external) to identify opportunities and challenges for implementing the matching fund. Council resolved in May 2010 that for each \$10,000 raised by the community, Council will match it on a ratio of 1:2.



Council's Community Plan was adopted in August 2008 and implementation of the five year plan continued during 2009-10. A key priority for 2009-10 has been the development of the Wyong Shire Youth Engagement Strategy.

The Strategy demonstrates Council's desire to support young people to achieve their goals and aspirations and be active, valued members of the community. The strategy is focused on improving the quality of life and wellbeing of young people who live, work, study and play in Wyong Shire and aims to provide opportunities which support and connect young people to family, community, education and employment.

Young people were meaningfully and purposefully engaged in developing the Strategy, playing an active and valuable role, partnering with Council staff on a Youth Facilitation Team, to shape and drive the Strategy from inception to implementation. The team carried out an extensive and innovative engagement process with young people in their own environments. The team also connected with businesses, community groups and agencies. Community input into the development was significant with over 1,000 people participating.

The Strategy provides a framework based on what young people have told us is working in the community for them and what is important to them both now and in the future - and building on this, what would be happening in Wyong if we could do more. The outcome was not only to generate ideas but a desire for young people and partners to be involved in taking these ideas and actions further and partnering in the implementation of the Youth Strategy. The Youth Strategy comprises four reports - Background Report, Youth Prospectus and two Toolkits.

Ongoing activities to strengthen or build community connections include asset based community development projects; facilitating events and activities (for example, Senior's Week, Youth Week, GOATS festival, Warnervale Annual Fair); supporting small local areas projects and local neighbourhood events; welcoming new residents; supporting community art projects; and Grant programs to support local groups build capacity e.g. the Wyong Shire Community Matching Fund.

The Wyong Shire Community Matching Fund is an initiative which supports community groups to create community connections through matched funding of community run and led projects. The Community Matching Fund aims to increase the active participation of community members, as well as support the development and implementation of community-driven initiatives and address local infrastructure improvements. The focus of these initiatives is at a neighbourhood level. The Community Matching fund requires a community financial contribution of \$10,000 towards a project and can offer a 2 for 1 match of this contribution. For example a group contributing \$10,000 is eligible for up to \$20,000 support to match this contribution. Contributions from the community beyond the initial \$10,000 threshold can be made in cash or by the valuation of in kind contributions.

In 2009, Better Futures (a NSW Government initiative) conducted an online survey entitled 'Your Spin' where young people from Wyong Shire voted on some activities they would like in their

region. It was identified that young people wanted more music events in the Shire. As a result, Council received \$60,000 from Better Futures for music events and activities that focus on providing opportunities and entertainment to people between the ages of 9-18.

Some of the events conducted included:

- Cre8te Twilight Festival held at Bateau Bay PCYC,
- DJ-ing workshops at San Remo Neighbourhood Centre culminating in a performance at GOATS,
- Music Development 'behind the scenes',
- Battle of the Bands 2010 at Oasis Youth centre,
- Wet, Wild n Rhythm in Toukley,
- Youth Connections Youth Orchestra,
- Drum Fest 2010 drumming festival,
- For the Love of Music Festival; and
- Dancing in the Streets.

These festivals and workshops allowed young people to show off their talents, develop new skills and have a great time. Based on the success of this program, Council has received additional funding for 2010-11 to continue and expand the programs.

The Ngura – Meaning 'Place' program was developed to increase awareness of the importance of physical activity and to improve student knowledge of health issues facing Indigenous Australians so that the individuals can make better choices in their own lives.

During the course the students covered:

- Aboriginal Health Issues including Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease, Bridging the Gap, Drug and Alcohol Awareness,
- Aboriginal Life Expectancy,
- health Quiz's,
- nutrition - Healthy Cooking Tips , Sporting Performance and Food,
- leadership,
- self Image,
- maintaining pride in their Aboriginality.

Students completing the course gain their Level 1 Certificate in Fitness, Bronze Medallion and their Level 1 in Aboriginal History. Success of this program is due to the hands on learning style where students actually went into a gym to do practical sessions as well as theory lead by inspiring role models and staff in the professions. Ngura is a partnership between Wyong Shire Council and Mingara Recreation Club.

Communities themselves are the key players in creating connections. Often carried out by volunteers they are a very important part of the connectedness in Wyong. These include, but are not limited to:

- *Cultural/Artistic activities* reflect and celebrate the uniqueness of a community and contribute to its sense of identity e.g. Music festivals, Annual Gathering of the Clans, several choral groups, musical and theatrical Groups, Arts and Photographic Shows.
- *Sporting groups* across a wide spectrum of organised codes and more informal activities, such as beaches and the proliferation of walking clubs. There has been a strong Central Coast identity created by the Central Coast Mariners football team.



- *Community centres* that carry out a wide range of activities such as youth centres, the amazing “Ball of String” that ties Blue Haven/San Remo together, activities in the parks and courses in a range of family skills.
- *Community organisations* including business organisations, service organisations, hobby clubs and increasingly learning groups for senior citizens.
- *Licensed Clubs* are for the most part contributing significantly to community connectedness through their sponsorships, meals for the elderly and facilities that would not be available except for the club’s involvement.
- *Festivals and Markets* that draw the community together and connect individuals including those that are Shire wide such as a Mardi Gras and local efforts such as the monthly Warnervale markets.
- *Religious organisations* across a wide spectrum of faiths that cater not only for the spiritual and emotional needs of the community, but contribute significantly to social programs and feelings of community connectedness felt by participants.
- *Schools and the University of Newcastle/TAFE* campuses can contribute to community connectedness. While some are outstanding, generally they are somewhat low key at present due possibly to a number of social and liability factors.



Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Community Connectedness

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
N/A	Stable	Stable	Stable

Without a continued focus on community connectedness, isolation and disconnection of some residents may occur together with a decreased sense of community as people become less involved and more insular. There may be an exacerbation of current social issues leading to a rise in demand for support services. Retention of the small village/neighbourly feel that the Shire currently offers needs to be maintained and developed further over time.

A more holistic approach to community engagement is needed by Council, government, non-government agencies and the community to ensure broader community representation and participation.

References

- Wyong Shire Community Plan 2008-2013 (2008)
- Quality of Life on the Central Coast: A Community Survey of Central Coast Residents (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008)
- Wyong Shire Youth Engagement Strategy (2010).



Participation in arts and culture

Culture and cultural experiences reflect and celebrate the uniqueness of a community and contribute to its sense of identity. Cultural activities bring people together and provide a rich foundation for community development and the building of social capital.

Cultural activities draw upon diverse social, economic, environmental and people-based resources and celebrate and enhance the experience of being part of that particular community (A Cultural Plan for Wyong Shire, 2005).

Recent research has drawn a connection between economic success and a community that is culturally diverse and vibrant.

“Cities need a people climate before they need a business climate. This means supporting creativity across the board and building a community that is attractive to people, not just high tech companies” (Richard Florida, 2003, Rise of the Creative Class).

At a Glance

There is a rich diversity of cultural groups, businesses and individual artists and performers in the Shire. Not counting individuals, these groups may be summarised as follows:

Adult Education Centres	5
Craft	40
Cultural Diversity	27
Dance	27
Events	21
Film and Media	11
Heritage	4
Music	23
Photography	22
Studios & Galleries	13
Theatre	10
Visual Arts	10
Writing, Speaking and Literature	8

Highlights of the cultural life of the Shire include:

- Traditional owners' 40,000 year history of living on the Central Coast. There are a number of organisations of Aboriginal people in the Shire.
- Post 1788 history of the Shire including the story of the timber industry, agriculture and transport and items of built heritage.
- Norah Head Lighthouse, Hargraves House at Noraville and St Barnabus at Yarramalong.

- Relatively small (compared with NSW) but growing and richly diverse multicultural community.
- Kooindah Acquisitive Sculptural Prize (approximately 2,000 visitors per annum).
- The Wyong Photographic Prize and Exhibition (approximately 4,000 visitors per annum).
- Wyong based theatre and musical societies.
- Central Coast Country Music festival (approximately 25,000 visitors per annum).
- Ecological and cultural heritage festivals across the Shire e.g. Gathering of the Clans (approximately 15,000 visitors per annum), Maltese Cultural Event, Whaledreamers Festival (approximately 3,000 per annum), NAIDOC Week celebrations.
- The Entrance Mardi Gras.
- Music program at Gorokan High School.
- A large number of dance schools.
- A number of contemporary music festivals both in Wyong and the Central Coast.
- A number of active cultural and art collectives, societies and performance groups, including but not restricted to Wyong Drama Group, Wyong Musical Theatre Company, Tuggerah Lakes Potters' Association, Toukley and Districts Arts Society, Wyong Writers Group, Supa Art at the Tuggerah Supa Centre.
- Regional arts networking groups such as Fusion Inc and the Central Coast Multi-Arts Confederation.

This participative, interactive engagement in cultural activities brings people together and is recognised as providing a rich foundation for community cultural development and the building of social capital.

Infrastructure that supports culture and the arts consists of:

- 5 libraries,
- 50+ Council halls,
- 8 community and neighbourhood centres,
- the Wyong Memorial Hall in Wyong township,
- a small art gallery at Wallarah Point Park Gorokan,
- a potters studio and arts facilities at Gravity Youth Centre,
- a movement studio at Wadalba Community School,
- parks and reserves,
- 2 privately operated cinemas in the Shire,
- Clubs,
- Wyong Community Cultural Centre,
- The Entrance Community Cultural Hub including studios, gallery, and movement studio.

The University of Newcastle Ourimbah Campus is also a significant cultural asset that supports tertiary education in visual, performing and literary arts. The Hunter Institute TAFE has begun a Fine Arts course at Ourimbah Campus. At a regional level Wyong residents have access to Gosford Regional Art Gallery at East Gosford, The Peninsula Theatre in Woy Woy, NAISDA Dance College, Laycock Street Theatre at Wyoming, Mt Penang Parklands festival venue and Lake Macquarie Art Gallery at Booragul.

Current State

Rating

Arts & Culture

2009-2010

Increasing

Key Drivers

- Infrastructure to support cultural activities.
- Funding for infrastructure and programs.
- Partnerships and links with sectors e.g. business and education.
- Regional links and competition between areas.
- Development of a Central Coast Regional Cultural Strategy with Gosford City Council.
- Availability of time for people to participate.
- Programs that promote arts and culture for all ages.
- Community expectations and changing tastes over time.
- Safe, efficient and effective access to facilities i.e. transport, disabled access.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
Key Focus Area	Central Coast Arts and Conference Centre (Performing Arts Centre).	Council endorsed via a tender process the commissioning of an architect team to develop DA designs and documentation for an Arts Centre that can be constructed in two stages. The concept designs have been completed for an Arts Centre to replace Wyong Memorial Hall and Council is working with stakeholder groups to lobby for capital funds from State and Federal Government. Pending funding and approvals the Centre opening target is mid 2014.
1.2.3.2	Implement Public Art Projects	<p>The Public Art DCP Chapter, addressing Council's requirements for public art as part of commercial developments exceeding \$5M, was adopted by Council. Criteria have been developed for the Public Art Advisory Committee and Public Art Project managers.</p> <p>The Canton Beach Public Art Project was successfully completed in accordance with the Public Art Policy and subsequently won a NSW LGSA Cultural Award.</p> <p>Re-installation of Public Art at Watanobbi was completed.</p> <p>Draft Public Art Plan completed for Hamlyn Terrace Community Facilities.</p>

Council's studies have identified a shortfall in cultural facilities for Wyong Shire residents which Council is addressing through the development of a network of community cultural facilities including management of The Entrance Community Cultural Centre and design and lobbying for funding for the Central Coast Arts and Conference Centre in Wyong.

Council's Cultural Plan provides an immediate and long term direction for culture and the arts for Wyong Shire. It guides the activities of Council and the community as the foundation for cultural development into the future.

Council's cultural development program consists of planning, project funding and capacity development with the overall aim of removing obstacles, building strengths and opportunities, providing infrastructure and enhancing the capability of the community to increase audiences for, and participation in, Wyong Shire cultural activities.

The implementation of the Cultural Plan is ongoing.

Council's annual Cultural Development Grants Program has \$30,000 available for the support of arts and cultural projects that are consistent with the Cultural Plan.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Arts & Culture	N/A	Increasing	Increasing	Increasing

Continued planning and provision of appropriate cultural infrastructure and programs will be required in order to continue to develop a vibrant cultural life for the Shire and respond to community activities and priorities.

The completion and successful management of arts facilities as well as development of a Central Coast regional framework for advocacy, program coordination and seeking of funding is vital to the increased strengthening of cultural activities in Wyong Shire.

Participation in arts and culture are key aspects and opportunities underpinning social and economic development. Council's planning, support and services for Wyong Shire culture encompass facilities, heritage, arts, events, recreation and open space and urban design.

A lack of investment in this area will have a negative impact on community connectedness and economic activity.

References

- A Cultural Plan for Wyong Shire (2005)
- WSC Community Plan 2008 – 2013
- Public Arts Strategy

Community Safety

Community Safety refers to both crime and the perception of crime that can affect people's quality of life and the many aspects of community life including trusting neighbours; the willingness of residents to move freely about the community; resident's sense of safety; use of public transport and the use of community facilities and public spaces for recreation and entertainment.

At a Glance

Crime rates are an indicator of community safety. The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics figures (table below) show that crimes in 15 out of the 18 major categories have remained stable or recorded falls in the last year. Crime rates for the Shire indicate that the rate of crime overall is below the State average.

Between 2005 and 2009 Wyong Shire experienced an increase in recorded crime incidents in the areas of steal from motor vehicle and steal from retail store. Remaining stable were the crimes of assault domestic and non-domestic violence related, sexual assault, robbery without a weapon, steal from person, fraud and malicious damage to property. There was a downward trend in incidents of indecent assault, act of indecency and other sexual offences, break and enter dwelling, break and enter non dwelling, motor vehicle theft and steal from dwelling.

The following data represents crimes reported to or detected by the NSW Police Force. The categorisation process is applied uniformly to all Local Government areas in NSW by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. Those incidents that have not significantly trended up or down are categorised as stable.

Crime Statistics Wyong Local Government Area 2005-2009

Offence Category	2009 Total	Wyong Shire Rate per 100,000 Popu- lation	NSW 2009 Rate per 100,000 Popula- tion	WS Annual Percentage change 2008/09	WS Average Annual Percentage change 20005/08
Murder*	1	0.7	1.1	N.A.	N.A.
Assault - Domestic Violence Related	749	511.0	371.8	Stable	Stable
Assault – Non-Domestic Violence Related	930	634.4	572.5	Stable	Stable
Sexual Assault	141	96.2	61.7	Stable	Stable
Indecent Assault, Act of Indecency	101	68.9	53.2	Stable	Down by 4.2%
Other Sexual Offences	34	23.2	21.8	Stable	Down by 4.2%
Robbery Without a Weapon	44	30.0	53.7	Stable	Stable
Robbery With a Firearm*	5	3.4	6.6	N.A.	N.A.
Robbery With a Weapon Not a Firearm*	11	7.5	23.8	N.A.	N.A.
Break and Enter – Dwelling	832	567.6	592.9	Down by 21.1%	Down by 8.9%
Break and Enter - Non-Dwelling	380	259.2	274.6	Stable	Down by 10.1%
Motor Vehicle Theft	530	361.6	319.6	Stable	Down by 8.9%
Steal from Motor Vehicle	1,147	782.5	672.4	Down by 28.9%	Up by 1.9%
Steal from Retail Store	451	307.7	293.7	Stable	Up by 8.5%
Steal from Dwelling	492	335.6	303.9	Stable	Down by 4.6%
Steal from Person	108	73.7	140.9	Stable	Stable
Fraud	417	284.5	496.8	Down by 33.5%	Stable
Malicious Damage to Property	2,661	1,815.3	1,449.5	Stable	Stable

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2010

Note: This table shows the results of statistical tests for a significant upward or downward monthly trend in the number of criminal incidents * recorded over 2 years and 5 years respectively, for selected offence categories. Where the trend is significant, the annual percentage change in the number of incidents is shown. "N.A." indicates that the number of incidents recorded was too small for a reliable trend test to be performed. For murder, the trend test is applied to the monthly number of recorded victims.



Numbers of apprehended violence orders (AVOs) are an indicator of the extent of domestic violence in the area. In 2008 there were 1,060 AVO's issued in relation to Domestic Violence on the Central Coast and a further 235 orders issued in relation to personal violence. The rate of AVO's on the Central Coast, 341 per 100,000 people is higher than the NSW rate of 325 per 100,000 people.

Community safety is about more than the level of crime that exists within the Shire. Perception of crime is also important as fear prevents people from participating in the life of their community. A person's perceptions can be formed from actual experience of crime, recounted experiences of family and friends and from media reports.

The Central Coast Quality of Life (CCRF 2008) asked respondents about safety in their neighbourhoods. Residents generally feel safe and view Wyong Shire as a safe place to live. However, a higher proportion of residents perceive that crime and public nuisance are problems in their neighbourhood (56% compared with 35% for NSW).

Rank for Wyong Shire by rate of Recorded Criminal Incident 2008 and 2009 (out of 152)

Incident	Rank 2008	Rank 2009
Assault – Domestic Violence Related	41	37
Motor Vehicle Theft	25	37
Steal from Motor Vehicle	17	27
Steal from Retail Store	30	32
Malicious Damage to Property	35	41
Steal from Person	#	44
Sexual Offences	#	37

Not in the top 50
 Ranking process is based on number of incidents per 100,000 population
 Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research 2010

Domestic AVO's Granted 2004 to 2008

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	No	Rate	No	Rate	No	Rate	No	Rate	No	Rate
Central Coast	1,142	374	1,021	332	1,028	336	1,028	334	1,060	341
NSW		297		287		289		323		325

Source: NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research



Current State

Rating	2009-2010
Crime Rates	Stable
Perception of Crime	Increasing

Key Drivers

- Community awareness.
- Willingness to report.
- Socio-economic factors.
- Personal experience of crime.
- Encounters with anti-social behaviour, graffiti and vandalism.
- Utilisation and design of public spaces.
- Level of community connectedness.
- Standard and maintenance of upkeep of public areas.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.6.1.1	Develop a Graffiti Management Strategy	A Draft Graffiti Management Draft strategy has been developed involving regular meetings with the steering committee. Council has had ongoing participation and involvement with the Northern Wyong Graffiti Forum and promoted and coordinated Graffiti Action Day. Community Art Workshops have also been undertaken in communities within the Shire.

There are two aspects to community safety: how we can prevent crime and how we can make people living in the Shire feel safer.

During 2009-10 a key focus for Council has been the development of a Graffiti Management Strategy.

The Graffiti Management Strategy has been developed in response to the proliferation of graffiti within Wyong Shire. Graffiti incurs substantial social and economic costs to the community. This initiative aims to contribute to connected and safe neighbourhoods by enabling residents to feel safe and build a level of public pride where community members have a respect for property and each other.

The Graffiti Management Strategy is the first step in a partnership between Council, the Police, local business and community members. The strategy undertakes a multi faceted approach to managing graffiti including Reporting, Monitoring, Rapid Removal, Rewards and Community Education.

Council has also been undertaking a number of activities that build a sense of community and encourages road safety:

- Continued to undertake a community development approach that facilitates the establishment of connection and linkages, builds a sense of community and trust in residents.
- Utilising Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in planning and design, for example in the design of the new Hamlyn Terrace Community Centre and Sporting Facility.
- The Community Safety Audit conducted in Toukley during 2008-09 resulted in the development of 'Together for Toukley'. 'Together for Toukley' is a local committee comprising representatives of local community groups, businesses, Council, State government and the Police. The group aims to counteract the negative stereotypes of Toukley, work together on promoting community pride and recognise the assets in the community.
- The Community Safety Audit also resulted in a focus on Community Art projects and Youth Inclusion Projects:

An example of a Youth Inclusion project was the successful 'Wet, Wild and Rhythm' event, held in March 2010 in the Hedor Street area in Toukley. This event aimed to engage local young people (10 years–17 years) in a variety of activities at the skate park, oval, pool and neighbourhood centre. The Hedor Street location was chosen because young people have always congregated there. Approximately 160 young people visited the event on the day, with 135 registered to participate in the activities. This experience confirmed the importance of supporting local young people in their own neighbourhoods. Providing support and structured activities reduces the risk of social exclusion and alienation associated with anti-social juvenile behaviour.

- Council, in partnership with Gosford City, focused the 2009 Speed Project on local roads and crash zones. The aim of the project was to improve road safety through awareness, attitude and behavioural change. Speeding continues to be a great concern on the Central Coast due to high incidences of speeding related crashes. This project aimed

to reduce the incidences and the severity of speeding drivers and riders. This project is designed to work in collaboration with the NSW Police and RTA to achieve a reduction of speeding drivers involved in crashes. Approximately 67% of all crashes that occur on Central Coast roads occur in 60km/hr and 50km/hr zones. There is a need to educate those motorists, who speed within these zones, of the dangers associated with speeding in urban areas and refresh/remind them of the speed limit. The project involved site selection, education & enforcement.

- Community workshops entitled Helping Learner Drivers Become Safer Drivers' were programmed in late April 2010 focusing on the NSW licensing scheme which requires learner drivers to have additional supervised practice. It is aimed at the parents and carers who are about to or presently teaching a learner driver. Parents and supervisors in attendance received advice on planning the supervision of learner drivers; information on the changes to L and P plate requirements and restrictions; tips for completing the Log Book for learners and the benefits of driving practice and constructive comments. In partnership with Gosford City Council, Council delivers four workshops throughout the year across the Central Coast.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Crime Rates

Perception of Crime

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Crime Rates	Increased	Increased	Stable	Stable
Perception of Crime	Increased	Increased	Increased	Increased

Resident's perceptions of crime appear to be higher than actual crime rates. There is a perception that crime and anti-social behaviour (linked to alcohol consumption) is increasing. Fear of crime may reduce people's willingness to be visible in their neighbourhoods and participate in community life.

An increase in community satisfaction and trust can lead to a lower level of concern about crime. A broader multi-faceted approach to crime prevention is required beyond a narrow focus on policing and law enforcement. This needs to incorporate both social prevention (focus on underlying causes, community development and early intervention) and situational prevention (modifications to physical environments through management and design) approaches.

References

- <http://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/>
- Wyong Shire Community Plan 2008-2013 (2008)

Community Facilities

Community facilities support the development of socially sustainable communities by providing spaces for social needs.

At a Glance

Council provides a network of community facilities throughout the Shire. These facilities provide spaces for community members, local groups and organisations to meet and for social programs and activities which address the social needs of the community. Community facilities include all purpose facilities (e.g. local Community Centre); activity specific facilities (e.g. Library) and groups' specific facilities (e.g. Youth Centre). The table below provides a summary of current provision.

Community Facilities

Public/community halls	26
Neighbourhood and community centres	16
Community Cottages	5
Youth Centres	4
Senior Citizens Centres	3
Child Care Facilities	6
Libraries	5
Arts and Cultural Centres	2
Recreation Centres	2
Scout Halls	5

There is a hierarchy model of providing facilities and provision of services to different catchments and levels of population based on the type of community facility and the level of service. The hierarchy includes regional, Shire-wide, district and local facilities. Residents who participated in the Community Plan (2008) process emphasised the importance of continuing to provide local level facilities as a focal point of activity.

Public halls are the most common type of community facility. The majority of public halls were constructed between 1950 and 1970 to provide meeting places for residents who primarily lived in villages. These halls vary in condition and use and most require considerable renovation to bring them up to current standards of maintenance and access.

During the last 10 years a number of new multi-purpose community centres have been developed to meet the needs of the Shire's growing population and to provide a hub for community activities. For example, Blue Haven Community Centre, The Berkeley Centre, local centres at Watanobbi, Mardi and Kanwal and most recently The Entrance Community Centre. The Entrance Community Centre which opened in 2009 has

set a new benchmark for the development and operation of community facilities within the Shire. With a redesigned landscape, new car park, workshops, general purpose rooms, computer rooms and a new "Men's shed" building, this centre's holistic approach has proved a community winner. Council is particularly proud of the Exhibition Art Gallery and Café space. The gallery has held an exhibition to acknowledge the anniversary of the June long weekend storms and is receiving much interest from groups and individual artists to use the facility. The café is operating from a Social Enterprise model and has had a steady increase in patronage from the community. It is currently providing a platform for the delivery of Certificate 2 in Hospitality training courses.

In twelve months the centre has seen over 40 user groups establish regular ongoing use of the facilities which include family support, play groups, arts, crafts and cultural groups, dance groups of all varieties, a local church group, training organisations, community support and advocacy groups, community development organisations, exercise groups and a neighbourhood centre. The facility's focus was then to create social capital in the local community by providing an important base for community service providers and groups in order to meet the needs of local individuals and families.

There are a variety of arrangements for the care and control of these facilities including direct management by Council, leases and management by local community committees.

Community participation in the design and development of community facilities is encouraged through the involvement of community representatives and key service providers in facility Steering Committees.

Library branches have resources, information, services and programs for all sectors of the community to engage in lifelong learning and to encourage use of the libraries. Existing branches require refurbishment and/or expansion as use (e.g. Special Collections (Local Studies)) is often limited by floor space constraints and only two branches (Lake Haven and Tuggerah) have community meeting rooms.

Facilities for community use are also provided by some religious groups, public and private schools, the University/TAFE campuses, shopping centres and licensed clubs. Sometimes these are provided as joint ventures with Council. While there is considerable scope for expanding community use of such facilities, their use is currently hampered by liability, cost and to some extent public perceptions.

Current State

Rating

Community Facilities

2009-2010

Stable

Key Drivers

- Demographic changes – increase in population, ageing population.
- Community expectations for quality facilities.
- Changes in community involvement.
- Increasing standards expected and required for public buildings.
- Maintenance costs.
- Environmental sustainability.
- Changing role of service provision.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.1.2.1	Complete design and commence construction for Hamlyn Terrace Community Centre.	A Development Application for the Community Centre and Part 5 Application for the Sporting Facilities was lodged in August 2009 and approved in October 2009. Construction of the community centre has commenced. It is anticipated that the facility will be completed in 2011.
1.1.2.2	Subject to secured funding and staging of the town centre re-commence planning, design and integration of community facilities in Warnervale Town Centre.	The proposed Warnervale Knowledge Centre (incorporating library, multi-purpose community centre and art/cultural space) is to be located in the Warnervale Town Centre and integrated with the shopping/business precinct (similar to the facility at Rouse Hill). Woolworths (significant land owner) have appointed a project manager to develop masterplans and civil designs for the town centre. Initial discussions have taken place between Council, Woolworths and its project manager on the design and integration of community facilities within the town centre. The design of this facility has been included on the 2010-11 work program. Recent changes to S94 legislation may also impact on this facility.

Stage 1 of the Community Facilities Strategy (Draft 2008) provides strategic direction and guiding principles in relation to the planning and provision of facilities. The strategic objective is:

- *To provide a network of facilities in Wyong Shire that is sustainable and responsive to community needs. Community facilities support the development of a strong community by providing a focus for community activities and spaces for the delivery of community services, programs and activities.*
- *All residents in Wyong Shire should have the opportunity to use community facilities, hence facilities should cater for a wide range of needs and interests, be welcoming and inviting, adaptable, safe and affordable to use.*

Community facilities need to reflect both a traditional asset management approach, relating to condition of building, as well as community and needs as driving principles.

Stage 2 of the Community Facilities Strategy will review facility provision and demand, taking into account current and projected population trends and community needs, usage, capabilities and limitations, gaps in provision and identify priorities for rationalisation, future provision and management.

An Asset Management system was developed at the end of 2008 which identifies details of Council's 'core' asset classes. The management system identifies the future capital, maintenance, renewal and replacement costs of assets and will serve to inform Council's long term Financial Strategy. Council has developed a four year strategy to improve the current system to move toward appropriately advanced level of practice by June 2012 which will improve the quality and reliability of the information contained within the Asset Management System. The asset management system will address the ongoing issue of planning, maintenance,

funding and management of community facilities across the Shire.

In 2009-10, Council was successful in receiving \$648,000 from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government for the upgrade of eight local community halls. These are: Tunkwallin Hall at Gwandalan, Colongra Bay Hall at Lake Munmorah, Kulnura Hall, Wyong Old School in Wyong, Myrtle Brush Hall in Berkeley Vale, The Cottage at Bateau Bay, Halekulani Hall in Budgewoi and the Hedor Street Hall at Toukley. These works are to be completed by the end of 2010.

During 2009-10 Customer and Community Services achieved a 139% increase of maintenance to Council's Community Buildings in which Council has received much positive feedback.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Community Facilities

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Community Facilities	N/A	Declining	Declining	Declining

Council has a legacy of ageing facilities requiring maintenance and upgrading to meet current regulation and service standards. The Asset Management Strategy has identified that the current level of expenditure for community facilities is not sufficient to satisfy the community or overcome known defects in a timely manner. Current proposed new building projects will increase the value of these assets by 30% resulting in an associated need for continued increased funding for maintenance.

Embellishments to existing facilities, where this is a feasible and practical option, can also be used to increase the functionality and future utilisation of existing facilities. It will also be important to prioritise facilities future provision and asset consolidation and ensure that whole of life costings are considered in the planning of new facilities.

Council needs to continue to move away from single purpose to multi-purpose buildings. The development of flexible, multi-purpose community facilities highlights the need to adapt to changing community needs/expectations over time, shifts in government policy/funding programs and new models of facility provision. Recent examples include The Entrance Community Centre.

Multi-purpose centres can become a hub of community services through co-location in the one facility and/or the co-location of complimentary related facilities (such as child care, libraries, community centres and cultural centres). This provides mutual benefits for both service providers and Council through potential cost sharing and income generation while at the same time delivering more effective services to the community. This extends to joint venture arrangements, where appropriate, to encourage use and make facilities available to meet peoples' needs.

References

- Draft Community Facilities Strategy, Stage 1: Strategic Directions and Guiding Principles (2008).



Education

Education is seen as an investment in the economic and social sustainability of the Shire. Skills and knowledge of the community contribute to both its social and economic strengths. A more highly educated community will create income generating opportunities for itself through innovation and creativity as well as generating employment opportunities from the range of businesses attracted by the skilled workforce. It will have a positive impact on the Shire’s social fabric, via improvements in community participation and health.

Education also includes lifelong learning opportunities, through participation in community groups and activities and recognition of the broader learning needs in the community, for example, academic, vocational, environmental or social.

At a Glance

Schooling

In 2009, the school retention rates for Wyong Shire from year 7 to 12 (defined as the proportion of students who started year 7 and have continued to year 12) for government schools increased by 6% from 2008 to 50.12%. This figure is 17.48% lower than the NSW average rate of 67.6%.

Apparent School Retention Rates (Years 7 - 12)

Year	Wyong LGA Retention Rate (%)	State Retention Rate (%)
2004	48.45	67.48
2005	44.78	67.17
2006	47.83	66.37
2007	44.30	65.66
2008	44.09	66.0
2009	50.12	67.6

Source: Department of Education & Training, Planning & Innovation. Data extracted from National School Statistics Collections (NSSC 1996-2009)

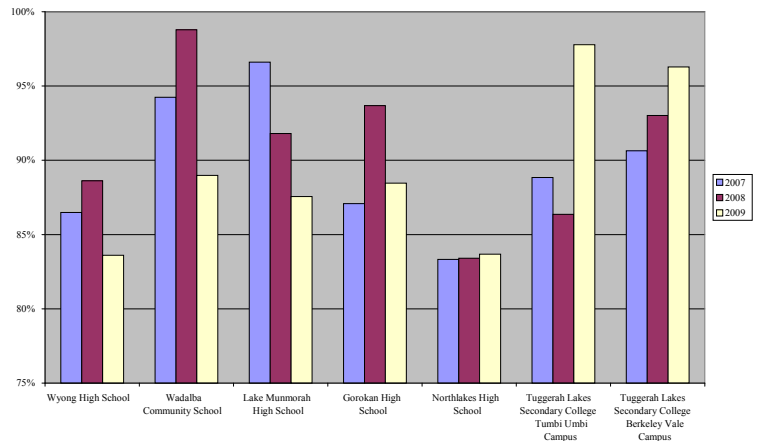
Results from the Quality of Life Survey indicated that progress is being made toward increasing education attainment on the Central Coast; younger people (under 40 years) were significantly more likely than older residents to have finished Year 12. Those residents who have completed Years 11 and 12 had higher levels of wellbeing than those residents who left school after completing Year 10 (CCRF 2008).

Central Coast residents who left school after completing year 10 or below were subsequently asked to indicate the main reason for leaving school at that time. The survey revealed that approximately 55% of ex-students said that the main reason for

leaving was to start a job and approximately 16% nominated to start training or education elsewhere.

The graph below provides full time apparent retention rates for years 7-10 (government schools) in Wyong Shire from 2007-2009. The data suggests that for over half of the schools (Wyong High School, Wadalba Community School, Lake Munmorah High School and Gorokan High School) there was a decrease in the number of students who choose to remain at school from years 7-10 in 2009.

Full Time Equivalent Apparent Retention Rates Yrs 7-10 for Government Schools in Wyong Shire (2007-2009)



Source: Data Collections, Planning and Innovation. Data extracted from National Schools Statistics Collections (NSSC) 1996-2009.

Post School Education

ABS Census and other survey data indicate lower education levels on the Central Coast than the State overall.

The table below shows that between 1996 and 2006, the number of Wyong residents participating in TAFE has increased by around 300. The proportion however, has decreased. There has been an increase in both the number and proportion of residents attending University. These rates are noticeably below the State average.

Participation in TAFE and UNI 1996 to 2006

	1996		2001		2006	
TAFE	2,611	2.3%	3,280	2.5%	2,920	2.1%
TAFE NSW		2.9%		3.0%		2.5%
Uni	1,483	1.3%	1,973	1.5%	2,272	1.7%
Uni NSW		3.3%		3.7%		3.7%

Source: ABS Censuses

Only 6% of residents in Wyong (NSW 16%) hold formal qualifications (Bachelor or higher degree; Advanced Diploma or Diploma; or Vocational qualifications). The Quality of Life Survey (2008) found that those residents with bachelor degrees were likely to have significantly higher wellbeing than those with certificate qualifications.

The establishment of the Central Coast (Ourimbah) Campus of the University of Newcastle together with the Community College and TAFE has been a major step forward in terms of providing local access to tertiary education and further training. In 2009 there were 3,880 students enrolled at the University (Ourimbah Campus) and 12,308 TAFE NSW enrolments spread across the three TAFE campus locations of Wyong, Ourimbah and Gosford. A total of 944 students completed a University Course at the Ourimbah Campus in 2009; this figure has increased by 170 people or 18% from 2008 (University of Newcastle; TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute).

Central Coast – TAFE Enrolments 2009

Location:	Enrolments:
Gosford Campus	4,213
Ourimbah Campus	3,850
Wyong Campus	4,245
Total Central Coast	12,308

Source: TAFE NSW - Hunter Institute

The Quality of Life Survey (2008) found that 14% of Central Coast residents believe that post school education and training opportunities in the region are inadequate. Residents aged 18-24 and 25-29 were less likely to agree that the education and training opportunities on the Central Coast were adequate to meet their needs. The single aspect nominated as inadequate was insufficient courses (60.9%), insufficient vocational training available (9.3%) and the University is not well located (5.0%).

Adult and Community Education

Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers deliver a wide range of adult learning and training opportunities including vocational, accredited and leisure courses which cater for life long learning. These courses are available at Tuggerah Lakes and Ourimbah Community Colleges. In 2009 there were 8,910 enrolments at Tuggerah Lakes and approximately 12,500 enrolments at Central Coast Community College.

Library Usage

Council's five library branches are an important education resource providing resources, information, services and programs. The following table shows a decline in membership since 2007-08 but an increase in circulation and internet/pc use. The Library also provides access to databases for research and education including online homework help for school students. There were 34,319 searches on these databases during 2009-10.

Library statistics

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Members	46,105	42,272	40,656
Items held	179,756	179,793	176,511
Circulation	976,698	994,292	962,030
Visits	649,125	648,029	671,895
Internet/PC	68,072	71,544	69,340

Internet usage

The prominence of the Internet as a vehicle for accessing information, communicating and undertaking commerce has continued to increase. The table below shows that Wyong Shire is below the State average for the number of households connected to the internet. While variable, internet speeds are generally significantly lower than for the greater Sydney region.

Types of Internet Connection, Wyong Shire 2006

	Number	%	NSW %
Broadband Connection	16,639	30.8	38.5
Dial-Up Connection	11,525	21.3	19.3
Other Connection	265	0.5	0.6
Total Internet Connections	28,429	52.6	58.4
No Internet Connection	22,230	41.1	33.7
Internet Connection Not Stated	3,435	6.4	7.9
Total Households	54,094	100.0	100.0

Source: ABS Census 2006 (Wyong Community Profile - id. Consulting)

While internet connection and internet speed is lower within Wyong Shire than that of the greater Sydney Region, the table below demonstrates the increasing trend on the Central Coast toward accessing the internet for business and personal use:

Internet Access Central Coast 2010

% of persons or businesses	March 2008	March 2008	March 2010
Home Internet Access	74	78	80
Home Broadband Internet Access	63	73	70
Business Internet Access	88	89	90
Business Broadband Internet Access	78	82	84
Business with Internet Homepage	44	44	52

Source: CCRF Central Coast at a Glance 2010

From the period between March 2008 and March 2010 Central Coast residents with home internet access increased by 6%, while Broadband access increased by 7%; similarly, businesses with Broadband access increased by 6%.

Wyong Council Education Programs

Council recognises the importance of education as an essential tool for achieving sustainability and has employed a full-time Environmental Officer (Education), a full time Road Safety Officer (Education) and four part time Officers (Education) to deliver a range of education programs and initiatives which reflects this priority.

Programs undertaken in 2009-10 include:

Road Safety:

- o Parking restrictions around schools,
- o Graduated Licensing Scheme,
- o Operation Bounce Back,
- o Child restraints, Speed Education,
- o CARES (Community and Road Education Scheme for years 5 and 6 children),
- o Bike week,
- o Walk safe, and
- o Drink driving campaign.

Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Education and Communications:

Communication Projects:

- o branding development,
- o community survey,
- o media campaign,

- o community newsletters,
- o new Council Website, and
- o health report card.

Education and Empowerment Projects:

- o Saltwater Creek Catchment education,
- o Mates of the Lakes,
- o community forums/workshops,
- o Saltmarsh Education program,
- o tours for Schools and Communities,
- o Estuary Education display.

Environmental Education Projects:

- o Little Green Steps,
- o Water Education for Preschools,
- o Water Education for preschools,
- o Blue Planet website for High Schools,
- o Glenola Farm Education Site,
- o Plants in Schools, and
- o PACT Platypus Awareness Campaign.

Wyong Shire Council Little Coast Kids Care and Education Centres

Wyong Shire Council operates six Care and Education Centres at Kanwal, Toukley, San Remo, Wyong, Killarney Vale and Berkeley Vale and five Vacation Care programs at Bateau Bay, Blue Haven, Gorokan, Ourimbah and Wyong. Council provides care to 240 children each day and offers 230 vacation care places each day during school holiday periods.

In 2009 the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia was introduced for early childhood educators to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. Children are given the opportunity to initiate their own learning and staff extend their knowledge through explanations, descriptions, demonstrations, questions, suggestions and further research with the children.

Every child who attends a Council Little Coast Kids Care & Education centre has a portfolio, which is a record of the child's process of learning. These provide a constantly changing series of snapshots of a child's time whilst in care and follow their successes.

Current State

Rating
Education

2009-2010
Stable

Key Drivers

The key drivers to education levels within Wyong Shire are:

- attitudes to education both school and post-school,
- accessibility to post school opportunities,
- socio-economic profile,
- telecommunications infrastructure,
- level of State Government funding and programs,
- level of private funding from major local employers.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.1.3.1	Operate Little Coast Kids' Care and Education as centres of excellence on a cost neutral basis.	During the past financial year, Care and Education achieved favourable results with expenditure below budget expectations. Staff have been accurately matched to children's attendance and vacancies have been utilised for occasional care.
1.3.2.1	Undertake a trial of the 'Living Library' program to support and celebrate achievements and diversity.	The Living Library Project offers an innovative and effective strategy to support communities by bringing people from diverse backgrounds and lifestyles together in conversation. Prospective 'Living Books' were collected by Library and Community Development Staff and a training session was held in January 2010 for these volunteers. The first Living Library program was held at Wyong Civic Centre in February 2010. Further events have been held at Warnervale Fair and at Library branches during Seniors Week 2010.

Through Council's Little Coast Kids Care & Education Centres a Literacy Transition to School program was introduced in August 2008 and continued throughout the course of 2009. This was a joint initiative between the NSW Department of Education and Training and Council. The aim of the project was to facilitate a more effective transition to school for children attending Council run centres and focuses on the area of Literacy knowledge. The literacy transition project was a success and addressed the following:

- building continuity,
- quality in early learning programs,
- awareness of children's diversity,
- building links between teachers in early childhood centres and teachers in schools,
- creating an upward spiral of learning.

The Little Coast Kids Care and Education Centres are moving towards a more sustainable focus. Vegetable gardens, worm farms, compost and recycling education programs have been implemented in the Centres with the children and families as well as programs to teach children about the importance of water preservation and the environment.

Saltwater Creek Education Project

The Saltwater Creek Education Project involved the development and implementation of behaviour change programs targeting landholders in conjunction with the rollout of the stream remediation program and other on-ground environmental works projects. This targeted program was a pilot project and focussed on connecting with the community and building social capacity and environmental awareness through education on the catchment about the two key impacts on Saltwater Creek - stormwater and litter/waste. Two workshops, community information events and a 'catchment crawl' (bus tour) were hosted and a resource kit was developed for schools. Resources for early childhood educators were also disseminated. A photographic workshop series and competition were run to engage the local community with nature and foster sustainable behaviour change through nurture/nature.

The Community forums and workshop project raised awareness in the community of ecosystems within the estuary and its catchment; especially through the development of people's knowledge in decision making, leading to attitude and behaviour change. A series of community workshops and forums were coordinated partnering with non-governmental organisations (NGO's) in the community to ensure that the community have opportunity for input to the lakes' management and increase learning, resulting in ownership of current lake management practices. Activities run included two saltmarsh tours, one waterwatch tour, one seagrass workshop, an evening presentation on the history and ecology of Tuggerah Lakes, attendance at a Platypus Awareness Day and a community forum entitled The Challenges of Tuggerah Lakes and Managing The Entrance Channel. NGO's included the Platypus Awareness and Conservation Team (PACT), Ocean and Coastal Care Initiatives (OCCI), Community Environment Network (CEN) and WyCare (Wyong Shire's Landcare Network). Approximately 500 people attended the workshops, forums and tours.

Living Library

In 2009-10 Council's library service introduced a Living Library program. The Living Library aims to bring people together in one-to-one conversation, to encourage understanding, challenge negative stereotypes and reduce prejudice. When participating in the Living Library program, residents borrow a person, not a book. The idea is to select the Living Book (person) you would like to meet and sit down for a 15-20 minute chat. In 2009-10 Living Library events were held throughout the Shire including at the libraries and at community events.

Scholarship Program

Council has initiated a scholarship program to help local secondary school students to undertake post-school qualifications and gain practical experience in their chosen field of study. As well as the financial assistance, projects are assigned to students and appropriate mentors selected to support and guide them at Council. Target areas for the 2010 scholarship year were IT, Finance, Engineering, Town Planning, Child Care and Education and Human Resources. These areas had been identified as skills shortage areas by local government and the community.



Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Education

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
N/A	Declining	Declining	Stable

The Quality of Life Survey (2008) found associations between completing Year 12 and income, obtaining post-school qualifications and income and leaving school early and unemployment. It is of concern that the QoL Survey identified that a relatively high proportion of residents believe that early school leavers have the same or better chances of finding work, chances of finding fulfilling employment over their lifetime and chances of being well paid at work.

If the issue of education across our community is not focussed upon by government and the community, the lower proportion of residents with post school qualifications and a continuing lower proportion of residents undertaking tertiary education compared to the State average will see the gap widen. Intergenerational unemployment and poor attitudes towards the value of education will have significant implications for the area's unemployment level, income levels and resultant quality of life. Significant intervention in this area will be needed to close the gap.

References

- Wyong Shire Community Profile (2008 - .id Consulting)
- WSC Community Plan 2008 - 2013
- Quality of Life on the Central Coast: A Community Survey of Central Coast Residents (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008)
- State Government: Central Coast Performance Dashboard 2008
- <http://www.cccen.org.au/>
- www.wyong.nsw.gov.au/tuggerahlakes



Health

Good health and access to quality services and facilities are important to the wellbeing of the community. It is one of the seven life domains for the quality of life on the Central Coast. Health is considered to be fundamental in shaping residents capacity to work and obtain income and to enjoy relationships and leisure activities.

At a Glance

Wyong Shire's socio economic status and demographic structure has significant implications for the provision of health services in the area. Population growth and the higher proportion of both older people and younger children place considerable pressure upon the resources of the Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health (NSCCAH). Increased growth and changing demographics is likely to hinder the ability of NSCCAH and other health providers to meet the changing needs of the area. The relationship between social disadvantage and higher demand for health services is widely recognised. As at 2006, Wyong ranks as disadvantaged on the Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) index.

Compared to the other areas within the NSCCH Central Coast residents have poorer health, higher mortality rates and high rates of behavioural health-risk factors such as smoking and obesity, and poorer access to GPs, primary care and diagnostic and specialist health care (NSCCH, 2008). This is reflected in high incidence of diseases frequently related to lifestyle such as diabetes and hospitalisation for alcohol related reasons. Wyong Shire has one of the highest levels in NSW of lung cancer and other cancers.

Wyong residents are reliant on access to the public health system with only 38 per cent having private health insurance compared to 63 per cent for NSCCH. For residents of Wyong nearly as many patients were treated at Gosford Hospital as at Wyong Hospital (NSCCH, 2008).

A number of major redevelopments were completed at Wyong Hospital in 2008 including a new and expanded emergency department, new medical and surgical wards, six new operating theatres, an extended medical imaging, pathology and pharmacy service, new outpatient clinics and education facilities (NSCCH, 2008).

The opening of the High Dependency Unit (HDU) at Wyong Hospital in May 2009 represents a significant improvement to the health services available in Wyong Shire. The HDU is for patients requiring: short term ventilation; post operative monitoring and; complex medical care. The opening of the HDU gives residents better services, closer to home (NSW ALP, 2009).

Radiotherapy for curative or palliative treatment is not publicly available on the Central Coast so patients are faced with substantial out of pocket expenses to access local private service providers or travel to services in Sydney. (NSCCH, 2008)

High and low care Commonwealth funded aged care places are undersupplied on the Central Coast with a rate of 103.9 per 1,000 persons aged over 70 years in comparison to 121.3 for NSCCH (NSCCH, 2008).

The median age of death for Central Coast residents (77 for males and 82 for females) is similar to NSW but three years below that for Northern Sydney residents.

In 2007-08 exercise levels were below State averages for males and females and the number of residents who were overweight or obese had steadily increased, with rates above the State average.

The Commonwealth Department of Health's guide for good doctor-to-patient ratios is 1:1,100 to 1:1,200 persons. This ratio is substantially exceeded in Wyong Shire 1:1,444 (CCDGP, 2009). As at August 2009, there were 310 GPs working in the Central Coast of which 212 (68%) were male and 98 (32%) were female. There was a higher proportion of GPs in Gosford 181 GPs (58%) compared with Wyong 131 (42%). The average age of GPs is 54.5 years (CCDGP, 2009). There are a number of barriers that residents face in accessing GP services. These include lack of GP's, and the cost and the inability to get an appointment. Wyong residents also indicated a high degree of difficulty in accessing GP services outside of business hours (CCRF, 2008).

From the Quality of Life Survey 2008 the following statistics were identified from a self assessment overview:

- Nearly 70 per cent of Wyong residents aged 18 years and over considered themselves to be either in good, very good or excellent health. A further 30% rated their health as fair or poor. Older age groups were also more likely to assess their health as poor or fair. People having post-school qualifications, higher income levels and in paid employment were associated with a higher rating of health status.
- Around 48% of Wyong residents reported one or more medically diagnosed long-term condition (i.e. a disease, impairment or disability that is expected to last more than six months). Nearly 60% of the diagnosed medical conditions of residents restricted them in their work or everyday activities. Those residents with a diagnosed condition were likely to have lower wellbeing than those residents who did not have a condition.
- Based on the body mass index (BMI), calculated as the ratio of self-reported height and weight, the survey reported that 60% of Wyong residents were either obese or overweight, with men more likely to be overweight than women. Residents were also asked to self-assess whether they were underweight, just right, overweight or very overweight. 42% of residents considered themselves to be overweight and only 4.7% considered themselves to be very overweight. However, the BMI calculated 20% of residents to be obese.
- Nearly 50% of Wyong residents stated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with health services, 17% were neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 20% were dissatisfied and 12% were very dissatisfied.

- Whilst a third of Wyong residents visited a dentist regularly (once a year or more), 45% of residents visit the dentist less frequently (once every two years).

Current State

Rating
Health

2009-2010
Declining

Key Drivers

- Population growth and changing demographic profile.
- Increasing numbers of people with complex and ongoing health problems.
- Evolving models of health care and health interventions.
- Supply of a qualified health workforce.
- Effective and efficient modes of transport that work for all groups, service providers and organisations.

Response

Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service developed a Clinical Services Strategic Plan in 2008 for acute hospital services in the region. Strategic directions include strengthening the role of Gosford Hospital as a tertiary referral centre and teaching hospital and further development of secondary level services at Wyong hospital with well established patient transport and referral links to Gosford Hospital for patients with a need for more complex services. Specific service related recommendations are provided for women and children's services, mental health and drug alcohol services, critical care, cancer services, cardiovascular services, neuroscience services, general medicine services, surgical services, aged and subacute care and clinical support services. Complimentary strategic plans are being developed in 2009 by NSCCH for primary and community health services.

The Federal Labour Government committed \$275 million over 5 years, starting in 2007-08, to establish GP Super Clinics in 31 localities across Australia. One of the areas selected by the Government is the north of Wyong Shire because it is a growing area, with many young families.

The Federal Government signed a contract in April 2009 with Warnervale Medical Services Pty Ltd for \$2.5 million to establish the North Central Coast GP Super Clinic. The Government's agreement with Warnervale Medical Services Pty Ltd saw a temporary GP Super Clinic operating in Woongarra in September 2009, whilst preparations and negotiations are currently underway to house a permanent state-of-the-art clinic in the new Warnervale Town Centre area by 2011.

Since opening in September 2009, the clinic has 1,700 patients on its books and has grown from delivering services to 241 patients per month to 1,157 patients per month. Seventy-five per cent of all billing is bulk billing for GP services ('Coasting' 16 February 2010).

The North Central Coast GP Super Clinic will bring together additional GPs, specialists, allied health professionals, pharmacy, radiology, pathology, rehabilitation, dental, physiotherapy and psychology services – all in one convenient location and with many of the services bulk billed. As well as providing families and people with chronic disease access to affordable care by general practitioners and health professionals, the new GP Super Clinic should also relieve pressure on the Wyong Accident and Emergency Department, which is one of the busiest in the state. In terms of direct service provision, Council has a role in health and wellbeing of residents through the provision of social open spaces that encourage physical activity and cultural expression. For example community centres, youth centres, senior citizens centres, parks, playgrounds, BBQ areas, skate parks, bike tracks and cycleways.

In 2009-10 Council adopted the 'Wyong Recreation and Sporting Facilities Strategy' which identifies a need to provide new facilities, and promote opportunities to develop new sites for sports and recreation activities in order to provide for the health and wellbeing of residents throughout the Shire.

Council staff attended training on healthy planning, and healthy planning criteria are being considered in the design and development of the urban environment to encourage and facilitate active living.

During 2009-10 Wyong Shire Council continued to hold free immunisation clinics for children under the age of seven. Clinics are held on the first and third Friday of every month at Wyong, Lake Haven, Long Jetty and Lake Munmorah. To cater for working parents, Saturday clinics are also held once a month at Lake Haven and Long Jetty.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Health

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Health	N/A	Declining	Declining	Declining

* The above data is based on the Quality of Life Survey conducted every 4 years.

Continued population growth and an ageing of the population will increase demands on health services. Increased prevalence of chronic health problems will necessitate a greater focus on the integration of community health and hospital based services. The lack of both high and low care beds (nursing homes and hostel accommodation) for the frail aged will place increased demand on inpatient and community based health resources. A focus on health promotion and early intervention is required to improve health status.

The existing shortage of General practitioners and allied health professionals is set to continue unless subsidies and/or incentives are provided to attract doctors to the area. The age profile of the region's doctors (average age 54.5) and nursing staff (most aged 40-50 years) is such that it is anticipated there will be shortages in the next 5-15 years. Such shortages may necessitate a move toward alternative methods of GP-based services such as Community Nursing.

References

- WSC Community Plan 2008-2013.
- Quality of Life on the Central Coast: A Community Survey of Central Coast Residents (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008).
- Northern Sydney Central Coast Health (2008) Clinical Services Strategic Plan.



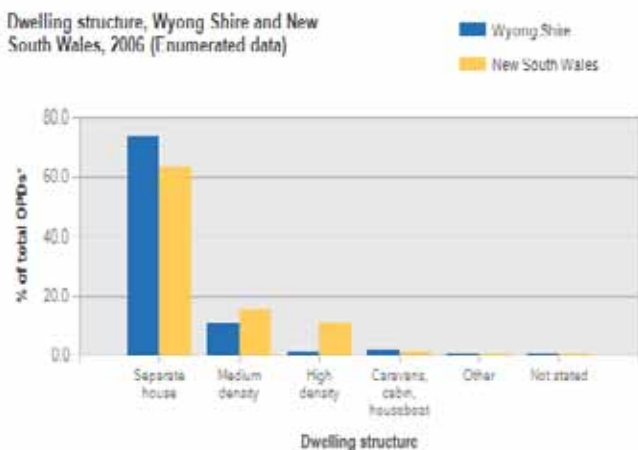
Housing

The availability of a suitable range of housing contributes to a community's ability to function in efficient, equitable, prosperous and sustainable ways. A shortage of affordable accommodation will limit the ability to attract essential workers while a variety of housing types, tenures and costs is required to achieve the concentration and diversity of people needed to support a full range of local services and facilities.

At a Glance

Overall the Central Coast housing market is characterised as higher growth, high need and high demand for social and affordable housing.

In 2006 there were 54,095 occupied private dwellings in the Shire. Compared to NSW, Wyong has a lower density profile as reflected in the graph below:



*ODPs refers to Occupied Private Dwellings
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing (Enumerated)

Except for Tweed, Wyong has more residents living permanently in residential parks than any local government area in NSW. Caravan parks and manufactured home estates provide affordable accommodation for low income earners. The majority of these residents are aged over 55 years and in receipt of a pension or benefit, indicating that there is a high demand for low cost retirement housing that is not being provided in the mainstream housing market.

The table following shows that Wyong is also characterised by higher levels of home ownership and lower levels of renting.

Tenure Type 2006

	Owned Dwelling	Purchasing Dwelling	Renting Dwelling
Wyong	35.6%	31.7%	25.9%
NSW	33.2%	30.2%	28.4%

Source: ABS 2006

There are currently 2,274 social housing dwellings in Wyong Shire, with 1,827 public housing dwellings and 382 community office housing properties, of which 97 are head leased in the private rental market for people eligible for public housing and 41 Aboriginal Housing office properties, with an additional 24 properties managed by indigenous housing providers. Public housing represents 3.1% of all housing in Wyong which is below the average of 4.8% for the Greater Metropolitan Region (Housing NSW, 2008).

Between 2001 and 2006 there was a 69% increase in the Wyong Shire median house price with only 20% of the Shire's population able to afford that level of housing. With the extensive level of greenfield development in the Shire there has been no lack of supply of housing, however the problem appears to be that the housing stock is not a good match for the current and future demographic profile of the Shire. This is particularly relevant to the very low, low and moderate income section of the Shire population where high levels of housing stress are being experienced. These include: young people, key workers, one-income families, older asset poor residents and special needs groups, including disabled, frail, aged and indigenous families (Promoting Choice: A Local Housing Strategy for Wyong Shire, 2008).

The Shire has more renters in housing stress than purchasers in stress. Wyong has a significant number of private renters in receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) and in housing stress (35%). Data indicates that the private rental market in Wyong is not adequately catering to the needs of lower income households in the private rental market and particularly small (single person) households. A significant proportion of CRA recipients in housing stress are on the aged pension (Housing NSW, 2008).

Recently, mortgage stress has hit middle income earners with an increase in numbers seeking charity to keep their families fed and bills paid. This has flow-on impacts on the local economy, community life and healthy functioning of many families.

The tables on the following page show median weekly rental payments and average sale prices from 2006 to 2009. The data demonstrates that Wyong Shire has experienced a 21.8% increase in rental payments for an average 3 bedroom dwelling from 2006 to 2009, however, the average sale price of dwellings in the Shire has decreased by 3.2%.



Vacancy rates are low and tightening, rents are rising strongly, demand is increasing and the number of people in housing stress is increasing. There is a need to increase the supply of affordable rental housing. There has also been a decline in the proportion of housing for purchase in Wyong that is affordable for lower income earners (Housing NSW, 2008).

During the 2009-10 period, the Department of Housing Rent and Sales Report No 92 (June quarter 2010) states that for two bedroom flats/units, the largest annual increases in median rent in the Sydney Statistical Division were recorded in Wyong (19.3%), Campbelltown (15.0%) and Bankstown (13.3%).

Median Weekly Rental 2006-09 3 bedroom dwelling

Location	Dec 2006	Dec 2007	Dec 2008	Dec 2009
Wyong	\$238	\$250	\$270	\$290
Gosford	\$268	\$290	\$310	\$330
NSW	\$265	\$290	\$320	\$340

Source: Housing NSW - Centre of Affordable Housing (2008)

Average Sale Prices 2006/09 (All Dwelling Types)

Location	Dec 2006	Dec 2007	Dec 2008	Dec 2009
Wyong	\$310,000	\$305,000	\$290,000	\$320,000
Gosford	\$381,000	\$377,000	\$344,000	\$402,000
NSW	\$370,000	\$394,000	\$360,000	\$420,000

Source: Housing NSW - Centre of Affordable Housing (2008)

The 2006 Census counted 817 people as homeless on the Central Coast. Central Coast residents account for the smallest percentage of NSW homeless population at 3% (excluding marginal residents of caravan parks). The rate of homelessness on the Central Coast in 2006 was 27 per 10,000 persons compared to 42 per 10,000 persons for NSW. The extent of homelessness may be greater than indicated by the data.

There are currently 17 Supported Accommodation and Assistance Programs (SAAP) funded projects on the Central Coast with eight services in Wyong Local Government Area (LGA) and nine in Gosford LGA. Almost half of the services are targeted towards young people and almost one quarter are targeted towards women (Housing NSW 2010).

Current State

Rating
Housing

2009-2010
Declining

Key Drivers

There are a number of key drivers that will influence the number, type and tenure of housing within the Shire over the next 20-25 years. These include:

- The State Government's Central Coast Strategy target of an additional 70,000 people for the Shire over the next 25 years. While the rate of growth that will result is not predictable, we will grow and there will be an increasing number of households formed.
- Demographics including changes to household structures and size and ageing of the population.
- The health of the local economy including impact on local employment, unemployment rates, occupation and industry types, income levels and therefore housing.
- Possibly increases in housing and rental prices in Sydney with obvious flow-on effects in this area.
- Rising land and development costs as they impact on the retail price of houses.
- Interest rates across Australia impacting directly on affordability, especially for first home buyers, existing mortgagees and investors and indirectly on renters.
- Government policies affecting both demand and supply e.g. subsidies and expenditure on housing, taxation policies on income and property sales, regulations on land, land taxes and levies.
- Gentrification of suburbs as old housing stock and lower rental private housing is redeveloped -limited growth in public housing.
- Increased reliance on Community Housing Providers.
- Housing design preferences of the building and development industry together with household preferences.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.5.1.1	Continue to assist the Department of Planning in developing the North Wyong Structure Plan.	The Department of Planning received funding to commence the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan (NWSSP) in 2008. Preliminary NWSSP prepared by Department of Planning Consultants, Cite Urban Strategies in 2009. Final NWSSP expected to be released for exhibition in late 2010.



Promoting Choice: A Local Housing Strategy for Wyong Shire provides a framework to address housing choice issues affecting the Shire’s population and aims to protect, promote and produce housing choice and diversity in Wyong Shire.

Affordable housing objectives have been included in the revised The Entrance Planning Strategy and revised draft Toukley Planning Strategy. Work has commenced on the Settlement Strategy and Comprehensive LEP which has objectives to provide for a mix and range of well designed housing in close proximity to services and facilities and can meet the Shire’s changing demographics.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Housing

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
N/A	Declining	Declining	Declining

There is a need to increase the diversity of housing stock across the Shire to address current, ongoing and emerging issues relating to housing stress (mortgage and rental), lower income ageing population, increasing numbers of lone households and changing family structures. Without a focus on this area there will be more pressure on public and community housing with associated flow-on effects in employment, incomes and ultimately the health of our economy and community.

Service professionals such as teachers, nurses, firefighters, etc. will find it increasingly difficult to obtain suitable housing on the Central Coast.

In the medium to long term it is likely that a number of vulnerable residents will be displaced, forced to relocate away from social and support networks in order to find more affordable housing or rely on charities, community housing and the like to provide basic shelter for them and their families.

References

- Wyong Shire Community Profile (2008 - .id Consulting)
- Quality of Life on the Central Coast: A Community Survey of Central Coast Residents (Central Coast Research Foundation 2008)
- Promoting Choice: A Local Housing Strategy for Wyong Shire (2008)
- The Housing Kit for Local Government in NSW, 2006
- BIS Schrapnel Report: "Wyong Shire - to explore the factors influencing new house and land costs (2008)".
- Housing NSW (2008) Information on Wyong Housing Market.
- Housing NSW (2010) Rent and Sales Reports Overview
- Housing NSW (2010) Regional Homelessness Action Plan 2010-2014 Central Coast.



Built Environment

Wyong Shire has an estimated population of 149,382 (2009), having grown from 105,000 in 1991, with an anticipated population of 200,015 by 2031. Over the past 25-30 years Wyong has evolved from a holiday and retirement area to an urban fringe area of Sydney. This was mainly due to improved railway and freeway access, affordable land and housing options, the coastal lifestyle and growth pressures in the Sydney basin.

Council's objective is to provide a balance between the built, natural, economic and social environments aimed at providing a good overall quality of life for residents, an attractive place for visitors and a prosperous economic environment as a base for this to happen. These cause tension between protection and preservation of the natural environment and land use, type of development, rate of development and the provision of facilities and services for residents, businesses and visitors.

At a Glance

At least 65% of the Wyong Shire is protected by some form of native bushland cover including forestry, National Parks and natural bushland. The remainder is made up of various aspects of the built environment and its surrounds. Wyong Shire has a highly dispersed pattern of urban and rural residential development with isolated areas in the north of the Shire and higher density predominantly contained in The Entrance Peninsular area.

Council tracks development across the Shire via its Land Monitor, planning strategies/rezonings and Development Application statistics (by number and value). These provide an overview of the rate that the Shire is developing. The following table sets out the number of lots created, dwellings commenced and vacant lots:



Lots created, dwellings commenced, vacant lots

Year (as at Dec 30)	Lots Created	Dwellings Commenced	Vacant Lots
	Lots Created	Dwellings Commenced	6,450
1989	1,038	970	6,450
1990	457	654	6,125
1991	408	664	5,666
1992	698	901	4,963
1993	718	795	4,734
1994	1,071	828	4,980
1995	904	723	5,466
1996	725	1,410	4,735
1997	575	1,092	4,218
1998	809	947	4,071
1999	659	885	3,402
2000	1,021	671	3,902
2001	425	939	3,466
2002	742	435	1,912
2003	690	873	1,987
2004	693	531	2,067
2005	484	881	1,733
2006	430	351	1,686
2007	439	536	1,498
2008	199	257	1,487
2009	176	299	1,398

Source: Wyong Shire Council Residential Land Monitor

While variable as land releases come on line, the average number of lots created between 1990 and 1999 was 733. This reduced to 530 between 2000 and 2009 and there were only 188 (average) lots created in 2008-09. The average number of dwellings commenced per year between 1989 and 1990 was 897, between 2000 and 2009 it dropped to an average 577 and in 2009 totalled only 299. This, together with the declining number of vacant lots across the Shire shows a slowing trend in residential development. (WSC Residential Land Monitor Dec 2009). The laws of supply and demand would dictate that as the supply slows down, demand remains and choice of lots narrows (declining number of vacant lots across the Shire) retail prices for residential land will increase.

Commercial and Industrial Land

In relation to employment generating land, the following tables show statistics for industrial land in the Shire.

Commercial Land Statistics (2008)

	Total Floor Space (m2)	Total No. of Shops	Vacant Shops	Vacancy %
Wyong	211,393	769	45	6

Source: Wyong Shire Council Land Monitor 2008
 Note: Surveys for this information are currently being undertaken for the 2009 period

Industrial Land Statistics (Dec 2009)

	Occupied		Vacant		Total	
	Lots	Area	Lots	Area	Lots	Area
Total	531	471.22	213	824.16	744	1295.38

Number of Vacant Industrial Land Statistics (Dec 2007)

Vacant and available for immediate development	Vacant, not fully serviced	Total
180	33	213

Trends for Wyong Council against State Trends

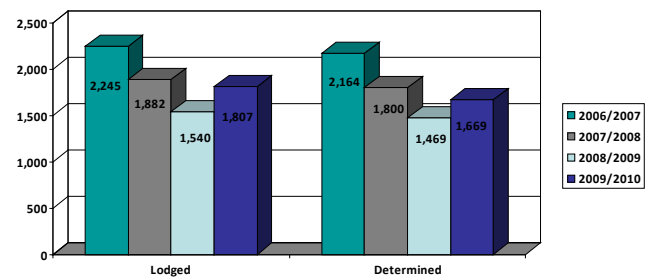
Wyong	07-08	08-09	Trend	NSW	07-08	08-09	Trend
Total DAs	1,505	1,223	(868)	Total DAs	82,403	71,637	(10,766)
Net median DA time (days)	24	26	2	Net median DA time (days)	30	28	(2)
No of CDCs determined	167	317	150	No of CDCs determined	5,697	9,194	3,497
No of CCs Issued	1,335	1,305	(300)	No of CCs Issued	65,815	56,863	(8,952)
Total value estimated	\$303m	\$196m	(\$107m)	Value Estimated of DAs approved	\$147m	\$130m	(\$17m)

Source: NSW Department of Planning Local Development Performance Monitoring 2007-2009

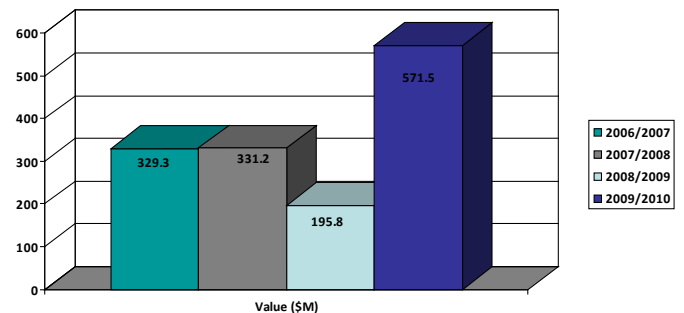
As at 1 July 2010, for the period 2006-2010 (4 financial years) a total of 7,474 DA's were lodged, 7,102 DA's determined and 139 DA's cancelled. DA's lodged in one year do not correspond with the number of DA's determined in the same year due to the "pipeline effect" of the application process. Variations will occur due to carry-overs and subsequent cancellations.

The graphs below show the trend in the number and value of Development Applications that have been lodged with Council during the period 2006-2010.

DAs received and Determined (including S96 applications)



Value of Approved DAs



During 2009-10 in Wyong:

- 1,669 DAs were determined,
- total estimated value of approved DAs was \$572 million,
- 185 Complying Development Certificates (CDCs) were issued,
- the net median determination time for DAs was 16 days.
- 953 Construction Certificates (CCs) were issued.

Planning Strategies and rezonings currently being undertaken and/or assessed by the State Government or Council staff include:

State Significant Development:

- Wyong Employment Zone: 340ha employment generating land, gazetted (zoned) 7 November 2008, but not yet subdivided.
- Warner Industrial Park Concept Plan and Project Application: part of Wyong

Employment Zone. 121 lot subdivision to facilitate development for a wide range of employment generating industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, storage or research purposes, including ancillary office space.

- Warrervale Town Centre: 25,000m² retail, 15,000m² Bulky Goods, up to 15,000m² commercial, 2,200 dwellings and 5,000 residents, gazetted (zoned) 7 November 2008, but not yet subdivided.
- Westfield Gateway Site, Tuggerah: Part 3A Rezoning and Concept Plan including 500 dwellings and 1,100 residents, 149,300 m² mixed use complex, 20 storey hotel/conference centre with a 320 room hotel, Business Park Precinct with a floor area of 140,000 m², Bulky goods 'Homemaker' precinct 25,000m², 7,600 jobs.
- Tuggerah State Significant Site Study Area.
- Wallarah 2 Coal Project Concept Plan and Project Application: 151 million tonnes of Run of Mine (ROM) export quality thermal coal, 3,000 construction jobs, 250 – 300 full time operational jobs.
- Rosecorp P/L Proposal at Gwandalan: 187 residential lots (rezoned but not yet subdivided). Application and concept plan approval deemed to be invalid by Land and Environment Court in a ruling handed down on 29 August 2009.
- Coal and Allied Proposal at Gwandalan: 620 residential lots. Application withdrawn, following ruling handed down in regards to the Rosecorp application.

Council rezonings:

- Comprehensive LEP (Shire wide), including a number of site specific rezonings for various purposes.
- Precinct 7A: 1,900 dwellings and 3,300 residents.
- Woolworths Supermarket, Lake Munmorah: 10,000 m² Retail
- Louisiana Rd infill precinct: approx 500 residential lots (not yet subdivided).
- Bateau Bay Crown Land: facilitate expansion of Stocklands Bateau Bay Shopping Centre for large scale retail purposes and enable expansion of Council's library and Customer Service Centre.
- Wyong Town Centre: rezone land in accordance with the adopted Wyong Tuggerah Planning Strategy.

Planning Strategies:

- The Settlement Strategy (Shire wide).
- The Entrance Peninsular Planning Strategy incorporating The Entrance North, The Entrance, Long Jetty, Toowoona Bay and Blue Bay.
- Toukley Planning Strategy incorporating Toukley, Norah Head, Norville and Canton Beach.

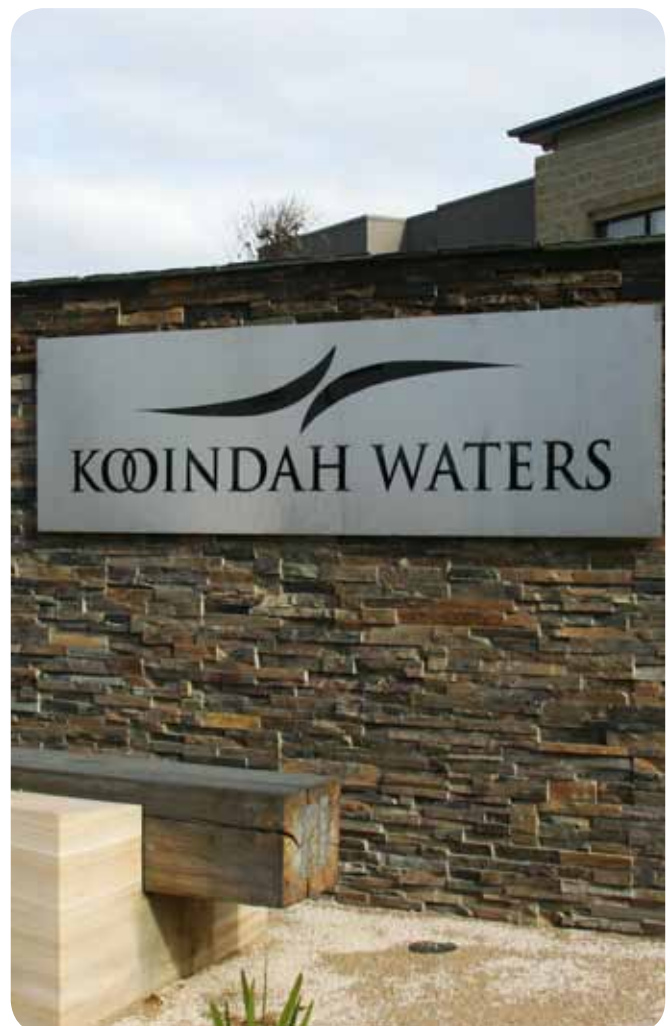
Current State

Rating
Built Environment

2009-2010
Declining

Key Drivers

- Population growth
- Rate of development
- Regulation, policy and governance
- Sustainability issues
- Affordability
- Development industry
- Economy
- Climate change



Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.5.1.2	Continue to assist the NSW Department of Planning (DoP) to finalise the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan (NWSSP)	DoP received funding to commence the NWSSP in 2008. Preliminary NWSSP prepared by DoP Consultants, Cite Urban Strategies in 2009. Final NWSSP expected to be released for exhibition in late 2010.
1.9.1.1	Continue to progress the Comprehensive LEP review.	Wyong Shire was recognised as a Priority LGA in 2009 and is required to have Wyong LEP 2011 gazetted by June 2011. Council is facilitating the concurrent exhibition of the Settlement Strategy with the NWSSP in late 2010 and is working towards completing Wyong LEP 2011.
2.1.1.1	Continue to plan for release of employment generating lands within Precinct 7A (Warnervale Village) with a view to gazettal in 2012.	Preliminary work has commenced on this project including undertaking consultation with relevant agencies and engagement of various consultancies in relation to specific issues (e.g. traffic and transport, flooding, flora and fauna etc).
2.1.1.4	Support the development and implementation of the Regional Economic Development & Employment Strategy (REDES).	The REDES was announced by the Premier on 3 February 2010. Regional Development Australia Central Coast will lead the implementation of the REDES, in conjunction with both Gosford and Wyong Council's. A review of the strategy will be undertaken every five years.
3.1.1.1	Finalise the Flooding Chapter of DCP 2005.	The draft chapter has been prepared and will be recommended for public exhibition.
3.1.1.2	Prepare a draft Coastline Management Plan (including the Coastal Hazard Study).	A draft plan is currently being prepared. The supporting draft reports including the coastal erosion hazard lines and geotechnical hazard assessment have been completed and are awaiting sign off from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW). The associated DCP and Summary Document for the plan are also currently being prepared.
3.1.4.1	Continue to plan for the release of lands in Precinct 7A (Warnervale Village) with a view to gazettal in 2012.	Preliminary work has commenced on this project including undertaking consultation with relevant agencies and engagement of various consultancies in relation to specific issues (e.g. traffic and transport, flooding, flora and fauna etc).

Department of Planning (DoP) Planning Reforms require each Council in NSW to undertake a review of planning instruments. These reviews must utilise standard zones, permissible and prohibited land uses, development standards and definitions, prescribed by the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006. Wyong Shire's LEP is required to be operational by 2011.

In response to the State Government's requirement to prepare a revised LEP Wyong Council is preparing, as an essential early step, a Settlement Strategy that will consider issues relating to Centres and Housing; Economy and Employment; Environment, Heritage, Recreation and Natural Resources; Natural Hazards; Water; Infrastructure and Transport.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Built Environment	Declining	Declining	Declining	Declining

"Both urban and coastal long-term growth trends will require vigilance to limit the depletion of natural resources, such as biodiversity, native vegetation and riparian zones, green and open spaces, prime agricultural soils, and forests, as well as the generation of waste. Improving land-use management and planning policies has the potential to reduce the environmental impacts of the expansion of urban and coastal settlement to more sustainable levels.

Much will depend on the essential infrastructure improvements needed to service sustainable urban development and continued efforts to better integrate future transport plans with urban consolidation strategies. Sustainability programs should guide the planning, land-use and management decisions made by industries, government agencies and individuals." (NSW SoE 2006)

References

- WSC Residential Development Strategy 2002
- NSW DoP: Central Coast Regional Strategy (2009)
- State Plan – A new Direction for NSW
- Promoting Choice: A Local Housing Strategy for Wyong Shire (2008)
- BIS Schrapnel Report: "Wyong Shire - to explore the factors influencing new house and land costs (2008)".

Transport

Transport comprises public transport, private transport, roads and other infrastructure such as bridges, cycleways and aerodromes.

Transport, except cycling and walking, is not without negative environmental and health impacts. It relies heavily on fossil fuels, contributes towards air pollution and produces greenhouse gases. Walking and cycling have many positive health and social impacts for the community.

In Wyong Shire the geography and settlement pattern make transport within and around the Shire difficult. Isolated communities, especially in the northern part of the Shire, three large lakes and narrow, slow roads up the valleys make travel times slow. Community Plan consultations (2008) highlighted the difficulties of living in an area with large travel distances, rising petrol prices, increasing congestion and public transport that does not meet the needs of the majority of its residents. Residents acknowledged that an improved public transport system could provide an alternative to the private vehicle thereby reducing congestion, pollution and carbon emissions. (Refer to Chapter 13 – On the Move, Community Plan 2008)

Private And Public Transport

At a Glance

Wyong Shire is struggling to keep up with the increase in travel demand due to the population increase. There has been a general upward trend in traffic volumes on main roads throughout the Shire since 1988 (RTA 2004 per comms, SoE 2003-04). Journeys to work via train have declined in favour of private motor vehicles. This is likely to be influenced by the limited public transport services in the Shire. Of those travelling to Sydney for work, 55% do so by car.

Method of Travel to Work for Residents of Wyong Shire (Daily)

Type	1996		2001		2006	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Train	2,154	5.4	2,709	5.7	2,281	4.3
Bus	599	1.5	556	1.2	560	1.1
Tram or Ferry	6	0	9	0	7	0
Taxi	30	0.1	38	0.1	34	0
Car - as driver	23,474	59.1	28,115	59.5	33,661	63.6
Car - as passenger	3,196	8.1	3,222	6.8	3,504	6.6
Truck	0	1,263	2.7	1,139	2.2	
Motorbike	261	0.7	239	0.5	250	0.5
Bicycle	240	0.6	199	0.4	217	0.4
Walked only	928	2.3	1,040	2.2	989	1.9
Other	927	2.3	672	1.4	487	0.9
Worked at home	1,778	4.5	2,061	4.4	2,093	4
Did not go to work	5,378	13.6	6,247	13.2	6,676	12.6
Not stated	733	1.9	860	1.8	1,070	2.0
Total	39,704	100%	47,230	100%	52,968	100%

Source: ABS Census and Wyong Shire Council

Private Vehicles

Private transport is heavily relied upon by Wyong Shire residents as the dispersed pattern of urban development in the Shire encourages reliance of private car travel and reduces the competitiveness of public transport. The number of new passenger vehicles registered on the Central Coast increased by 5.51% between June 2007 and June 2009 compared to a population increase of approximately 2.1% over the same period. There was a significant increase in the number of motorcycle and commercial vehicle registrations between this period of 21.1% and 13.7% respectively. There has continued to be a dramatic decrease in the registration of leaded petrol vehicles over this period. The table on the following page shows vehicle registrations by vehicle fuel type, as at June 2009, and the change since June 2007:

Between 2001 and 2006 there was an increase in the number of households that own 2 or 3 vehicles and a decrease in 1 or no vehicle households. This may reflect more teenagers with cars, higher disposable incomes or issues with access to public transport. Later figures are not available, but are expected to show a decline in this trend due to rising costs of fuel and living expenses in general. In 2008 one quarter of Wyong respondents to the Quality of Life Survey indicated that they had walked or ridden a bicycle when they normally would have driven to work or an activity.

Vehicle registrations by vehicle fuel type

Vehicle Type	Fuel Types				Group Total
	Petrol - Unleaded	Petrol - Leaded	Diesel	Petrol and LPG	
Passenger Vehicles	70,316	1,940	2,282	2,120	77,078
	5.21%	-26.8%	37.2%	49.4%	5.51%
Motorcycles	3,359	309	1	4	3,722
	25.1%	-10.2%	0%	-42.9%	21.1%
Light Trucks	8,482	597	3,987	1,149	14,291
	12.6%	-38.2%	28.3%	34.4%	13.7%
Heavy Trucks	12	7	1,293	8	1,330
	-14.3%	-30%	0%	100%	-0.1%
Group Total	82,209	2,853	7,563	3,281	96,421
	6.65%	-27.9%	58.52%	43.84%	8.7%

Source: ABS Census and Wyong Shire Council

Buses

The Ministry of Transport (MOT) has two contracts for bus servicing on the Central Coast – one with The Red Bus Service, the other with Busways (which subcontracts some of its services to Coastal Liner Coaches). The bus companies are paid for establishment, fleet costs and maintenance and a rate per kilometre of travel. (See Community Plan 2008, Chapter 13 - On the Move for service routes).

During 2009-10, the local bus fleet was upgraded with 14 additional new energy efficient (Euro V), air conditioned and low floor step less entry buses. These replaced older, less energy efficient and accessible vehicles.

At the end of 2009, New South Wales Transport and the bus companies carried out a public consultation for a bus servicing review. Some services have commenced following the review. These include express buses from The Entrance to Gosford Railway Station and Wyong Railway Station.

Trains and Rail Infrastructure

Wyong is serviced by the main Newcastle – Sydney railway line with main stations at Tuggerah and Wyong. Ourimbah and Warnervale stations have smaller platforms and more intermittent timetables. There is a new commuter based station planned for Warnervale as part of the Warnervale Town Centre.

RailCorp has advised that the Sydney – Newcastle and Sydney - Central Coast rail line had an on-time running rate of 93.3% for the 2009-10 Financial Year up to May 2010. This is an improvement on the 93.1% in 2008-09.

In 2006, 49.7% of people worked within the Shire and 38.5% worked outside the Shire. Between 2001 and 2006 the number of people commuting outside of the region for work has increased by 2,302 however, the proportion has remained stable. (Community Plan, Chapter 13 - On the Move).

Cycleways

The Shire has approximately 110km of off-road shared pathways for use by pedestrians and cyclists and approximately 50km of on-road bicycle lanes for use by cyclists. Many new residential subdivisions provide either on-road bicycle lanes or off-road shared pathways as part of these new developments. The amount of bicycle lanes and shared pathway added annually via subdivisions is directly dependent upon the number of subdivisions and/or land releases commenced during that time.

In 2009-10 Council extended its on-road bicycle and shared pathway network by constructing (approximately):

- 200m - Buff Point/Budgewoi foreshore,
 - 1,220m - The Entrance North to Magenta,
 - 800m - Mannering Park (Lake Macquarie foreshore),
 - 200m - Mannering Park (Oval to Campbell parade reserve),
 - 550m - Tunkawallin (Oval to school),
- Total = 2,970m

State Government funding has been approved for Tuggerah Lakes Foreshore at Lucinda Close (a length of 400 metres at Killarney Vale) and at Toukley (a length of 800 metres linking the existing shared pathways located at Canton Beach foreshore and Denison Street, Norville).

Council spent approximately \$125,000 of general revenue during 2009-10 on shared pathways. In addition to this, funds were received from other sources such as grants and s94 Contributions.

The amount of grant funding per year varies significantly, and this together with topography significantly affects the amount of pathway added each year.

Council has developed On-road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy for the Shire, which identifies:

- the strategic principles on how to deliver a safe and interconnected network,
- the key locations and destinations to be linked via on-road and off-road shared pathways and,
- the key infrastructure and actions required to encourage, support and promote use of on-road and off-road shared pathways.

The Strategy identifies the priority projects together with an accompanying action plan to deliver and implement the strategy principles and recommendations.

Warnervale Aerodrome

Warnervale aerodrome is an unlicensed general aviation airport for light single or twin engine aircraft. The runway is 970 metres long with its alignment approximately north south. There are no proposals to increase the size of the runway.

The State Government is currently considering the rezoning of the site as part of the Wyong Employment Zone precinct as Employment Generating land. The Central Coast Aero Club currently leases the site from Council under an agreement until 2021.

Council's Vehicle Fleet

Council has largely phased out LPG vehicles (replaced with 4 cylinder diesels) due to issues with vehicle reliability. Council has introduced a revised Motor Vehicle policy that promotes more sustainable vehicle choices through pricing incentives that

encourages selection of smaller vehicles. This is evident in the large decrease in the number of 6 cylinder passenger vehicles.

Council is contributing around \$82,000/year to offset its fleet greenhouse emissions through Greenfleet plantings.

Other initiatives include selection of high efficiency trucks that also comply with Euro IV emission standards, truck downsizing to the smallest size that still meets operational needs & staff information advising the adverse impacts (environmental and equipment life) of leaving modern diesel engines idling for more than 5 minutes.

Current State

Rating
Transport

2009-2010
Declining



Number and type of Council vehicle

	2008-09	2009-10
Heavy plant (graders, rollers, excavators etc)	64	55
Trucks & bogey trailers (light & heavy)	116	121
Commercial vehicles (utes & vans)	136 76% 4 cylinder, 24% 6 cylinder, no 8 cylinder	139 87% 4 cylinder, 13% 6 cylinder, no 8 cylinder
Passenger cars	183 39% 4 cylinder, 62% 6 cylinder, no 8 cylinder cars	188 59% 4 cylinder, 41% 6 cylinder, no 8 cylinder cars

Key Drivers

- Level of employment/unemployment across the Shire and the Central Coast.
- Efficiency, effectiveness and affordability of public transport options as opposed to private transport.
- Cost and availability of alternative fuels and modes of transport into the future; level of research and development of these alternatives.
- Level of State prioritisation of transport issues on the Central Coast and associated funding versus metropolitan infrastructure and services.
- Changing legislation relating to bus services, and taxis.
- Cost of living as it relates to residents and visitors choice of mode of transport for work and family and holiday trips.
- Location, efficiency of cycleways and pathways to connect significant places across the Shire with associated safe, viable infrastructure at destinations e.g. train stations, shopping centres, work places.
- Level of services – frequency and timing of service, connections between modes of transport, physical design, safety and security.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.7.1.1	Incorporate accessible enhanced and sustainable provision of public transport services to the new communities within Precinct 7A (Warnervale Village).	A consultant is in the process of undertaking the traffic modelling for Precinct 7A. The model has been calibrated. The consultancy includes identifying an appropriate public transport service that will encourage its use.
1.7.2.1	Construct the third stage of the North Entrance Cycleway and liaise with relevant external agencies with respect to further route development.	Stage three of the North Entrance Cycleway has been completed. Council has been negotiating future route development with external agencies.
1.7.2.2	Subject to funding, commence implementation of the Shared Pathways and Bicycle Strategy.	Council has continued to provide shared pathways throughout the Shire linking residents with key recreation and community facilities. The planning of new on-road bicycle and shared pathway infrastructure will be based upon the strategic principles contained within the On-Road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy.

Upgrading of the Tuggerah Railway Station has been completed. It included additional commuter parking a bus terminus and taxi facilities.

NSW Transport also completed in June 2010 additional commuter carparking for approximately 50 parking spaces at Ourimbah Railway Station. It has also commenced investigations into providing an additional 200 parking spaces at Wyong Railway Station.

CityRail currently operates up to 16 x 4-car sets of OSCAR carriages on the Central Coast line to provide 190 services each week.

Council has been working closely with the Northern Transport Working Party and other local community groups to advocate improvements to bus servicing throughout the Shire, particularly in the northern part.

Planning Strategies, rezonings, major subdivision and development applications require the submission of traffic and transport studies and reports to Council for assessment and approval. Council employs transport planners/engineers in its Future Planning Unit to ensure that the planning and implementation of transport networks across the Shire are integrated. Council also has a significant advocacy role for additional transport related resources in association with the RTA, Central Coast Transport Working Group, New South Wales Transport and Rail Corp. Council also is working with the Northern Sydney Central Coast Health Service and local schools to promote and encourage alternative transportation programs such as walking and cycling. Council also coordinates the Wyong Shire Local Traffic Committee (meets monthly).

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Transport

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Declining	Declining	Declining	Declining

While people indicate that they would utilise public transport more if it was able to readily satisfy their needs, this will not occur without investment across all modes of public transport as well as alternatives such as safe, efficient, connected pathways/cycleways. This is not expected to amount to a significant shift in private vehicle use over the next 10 years at least.

Express bus services will be considered for some routes to provide commuters a faster service to railway stations. Smaller buses may become a viable option for commercial contractors, with assistance from government. Community bus services will continue to provide safe, convenient access to clubs within a reasonable radius for local patrons.

The Night Owl bus service should be reinstated to provide safe and affordable transport from night venues for young people.

From 10 October 2010, CityRail will increase the utilisation of the 16 x 4-car sets of OSCAR carriages on the Central Coast line to provide 224 services each week.

A fast train in the next 20 years is highly unlikely given the State Government funding priorities in the Sydney Metropolitan area.

State Government funding has been approved for construction on the shared pathway on Tuggerah Lakes Foreshore at Lucinda Close (a length of 400 metres at Killarney Vale) and at Toukley (a length of 800 metres linking the existing shared pathways located at Canton Beach foreshore and Denison Street, Norville).

References

- WSC Community Plan 2008 - 2013
- NSW Government: Central Coast Regional Strategy (2008)
- NSW SoE 2006
- NSW State Plan Regional Delivery Update
- NSW Central Coast Performance Dashboard
- WSC On-Road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy (2010).



Leisure, Recreation & Open Space

Passive Recreation Areas

Access to the natural environment and outdoor leisure is very important to residents as an attribute for living in Wyong Shire. The Shire has always supported visitation and residents attracted by the diversity of outdoor recreation settings and the range of passive recreation activities they support. The high proportions of children and seniors creates a higher than normal demand for access to parks, playgrounds and pathways to enjoy the outdoors.

At a Glance

Passive recreation areas include local parks and reserves and contain facilities such as playgrounds, shared pathways, picnic tables and barbecue facilities. Council currently maintains 151 playgrounds, 409 parks and reserves, and approximately 110km of shared pathways and 70km of foreshore reserves. Recent user satisfaction surveys have revealed that community satisfaction with Council maintained passive and active outdoor recreation facilities has increased in each of the past 2 years.

There is increased demand for parkland in coastal areas for tourist use by large groups which can create a sense of displacement for local residents. The Estuary Management Program includes upgrade of major passive recreation areas around Tuggerah Lakes and better connections between areas. This is likely to lead to increased demand for major areas and lead tourists away from local facilities.

In 2009-10 Council completed a number of projects including:

- a new accessible Playground at Canton Beach,
- reconstruction of Lions Park Long Jetty, and
- preparation of a number of approvals and document sets for construction in 2010-11.

In February – June 2010, Council undertook a Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey to provide information to Council regarding park users and park usage, measure park user's satisfaction with the level of park maintenance and obtain park user's requirements for facility/ service provision. The surveys were conducted in 20 parks within Wyong Shire.

The key findings were:

- 42% of participants visited the park more than once per week (with 15% visiting daily and 27% a few days per week).
- 32% of participants visited the park for half to one hour and 27% for one to two hours.
- 17% of participants were visiting the park to walk, 15% for children's play and 12% to enjoy the park.
- Of the people visiting the park with one or more other people, 54% were adults and children, 22% adults and 10% teens.

- 55% of participants travelled in a private vehicle to the park, 42% walked and 3% cycled.
- 100% of survey participants felt that the park was a safe place to visit during the day. At night 25% of participants felt the park was safe at night, with 28% of people feeling that the park was not safe.
- 93% of participants lived/ were staying in a dwelling with a private backyard.

Current State

Rating
Passive Recreation Area

2009-2010
Declining

Key Drivers

- The continued increase in the proportion of seniors and expressed demand for recreation.
- The popularity of the coastal and natural areas of Wyong for tourism especially from Sydney.
- Potential overuse of passive recreation settings creating a lower quality experience and dissatisfaction with public places.
- The potential impacts of Climate Change on passive recreation settings in Coastal areas such as more intense storms and sea level rise.
- Community Feedback on the maintenance standard and safety of parks and playgrounds.
- Requests from residents for additional facilities.
- Increased interest in community involvement in passive recreation areas.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.8.1.1	Integrate the Sporting Facilities Strategy and the Recreation Facilities Strategy with each other and with other relevant strategies of Council.	The Recreation and Sporting Facilities Strategy was adopted by Council in October 2009 and is being incorporated into other relevant planning strategies.
1.8.3.1	Subject to funding, commence implementation of the Shared Pathways and Bicycle Strategy.	Council has continued to provide shared pathways throughout the Shire linking residents with key recreation and community facilities. The planning of new on-road bicycle and shared pathway infrastructure has been based upon the strategic principles contained within the On-Road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy.

Council is undertaking a number of initiatives to address passive recreation throughout the Shire, as follows:

- Upgrade of major recreation areas around Tuggerah Lakes under the Estuary Management Plan to provide settings that can accommodate increased use and draw large groups away from smaller local parks.
- Completed the Saltwater Creek and commenced Canton Beach regional, accessible playgrounds. These cater for all age groups together with focussing on share activities to include seniors in these areas.
- Completed Buff Point Cycleway.
- New facilities for cyclists around lakes at San Remo, Buff Point and Picnic Point.
- Seeking increased involvement by residents in the design of parks through improved consultation and the community artists program in Parks such as Canton Beach Playground working with the local schools and residents.
- Debra Anne Drive Local Park, Bateau Bay in partnership with Housing NSW.
- Increased maintenance budget allocation in 2009-10 to provide a higher quality product.
- Endorsement of a Recreation Facilities Strategy, engaging with key stakeholders.
- Preparation and exhibition of the On Road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy.
- Major strategic reports such as the Shire Strategic Vision (2009), Local Parks Strategy (August 2005), Estuary Management Plan Recreation Facilities Strategy (2008) and the Recreation Facilities Strategy (2009) continue to identify issues and guide the development of recreation areas.



Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Passive Recreation Areas

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Passive Recreation Areas	N/A	Declining	Declining	Declining

Ageing assets, an increasing population base, and an expanding urban footprint, accompanied by installation of additional facilities will result in an increased requirement for investment in upgrading and maintenance of passive recreation areas and facilities. This will be offset to some extent by the increased budget allocation for maintenance.

In high demand areas there may be a reduction in the quality of the recreation experience as conflicts occur between user groups with increasingly different needs and expectations. This may be ameliorated by construction of larger regional playgrounds.

There will be continued degradation of natural areas as people seek passive recreation experiences in natural settings not developed to support the recreational use without attention to management and ongoing maintenance of the natural system.

References

- Getting Australia Active, NPHP, 2002
- Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey 2006, Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, 2007
- Local Parks Strategy, WSC, 2005
- WSC Community Plan 2008 -2013
- Global Age Friendly Cities, W.H.O., 2007
- Integrated Open Space Services – Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey, 2008-2010
- Wyong Shire Recreation and Sporting Facilities Strategy (2009)
- On-Road Bicycle and Shared Pathway Strategy (2010)
- Benchmark Park User Satisfaction Survey Program (2010)

Active Recreation Areas

At A Glance

The size of Wyong Shire and its short period of intense development contribute to significant opportunities for active recreation in natural settings and a backlog of unmet demand by a growing population for recreation facilities. The need to fund capital works to meet this backlog has contributed to a past lack of funding for asset management.

There are more than 60 sports being played competitively in the Shire and there is a range of active recreation pursuits undertaken by visitors and residents to the Shire.

There are 78 separate facilities catering for outdoor field and court sports (38 developed by Council), 5 major indoor sporting facilities (Council contributed to 4), 2 major indoor Aquatic centres, an outdoor pool and ocean baths.

Wyong Shire has a high proportion of children and teenagers, who are the major participants in active recreation, especially competitive sports. Wyong also has an unusually high proportion of people over 50 who are also seeking appropriate active recreation opportunities especially in low contact pursuits such as exercise stations, gyms, golf, tennis, swimming, cycling and walking.

There is a broad range of active recreation being pursued such as paddling, surfing, skating, dance and fitness activities. In team sports there is a shift to lower contact sports such as soccer and touch football which have also enjoyed significant increases from women's participation. This has contributed to a greater retention in girl's physical activity in Wyong.



Current State

Rating

Active Recreation Area

2009-2010

Stable

Key Drivers

- Continued population growth in children and youth.
- Increased demand for active recreation facilities for seniors.
- Increased levels of obesity in the general population and especially in children.
- Increased focus on incidental exercise.
- Community expectations for quality settings for active recreation and sporting facilities.
- Utilisation figures for Council facilities continue to grow.
- Increased popularity of types of sport for example soccer.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.8.1.4	Complete the Open Space and Recreation Rolling Works Program and prepare concept plans for 2010-11 identified works.	Works completed include new shared pathways, installation of lighting to numerous sporting fields and a number of new or upgraded playgrounds.
1.8.1.2	Subject to secured funding, finalise the construction of the Woongarra Playing Fields and associated multi use recreation infrastructure.	Completed and opened to the public.
1.8.1.3	Subject to secured funding, commence the construction of the Hamlyn Terrace Playing Fields and associated multi use recreation infrastructure.	Construction commenced, to be completed in 2011.
1.8.4.2	Develop measures for quarterly reporting on the utilisation of EDSACC Leisure Centre, Lake Haven Recreation Centre, Wyong, Toukley and The Entrance Pools.	Complete and in the process of implementation.

Capital projects included:

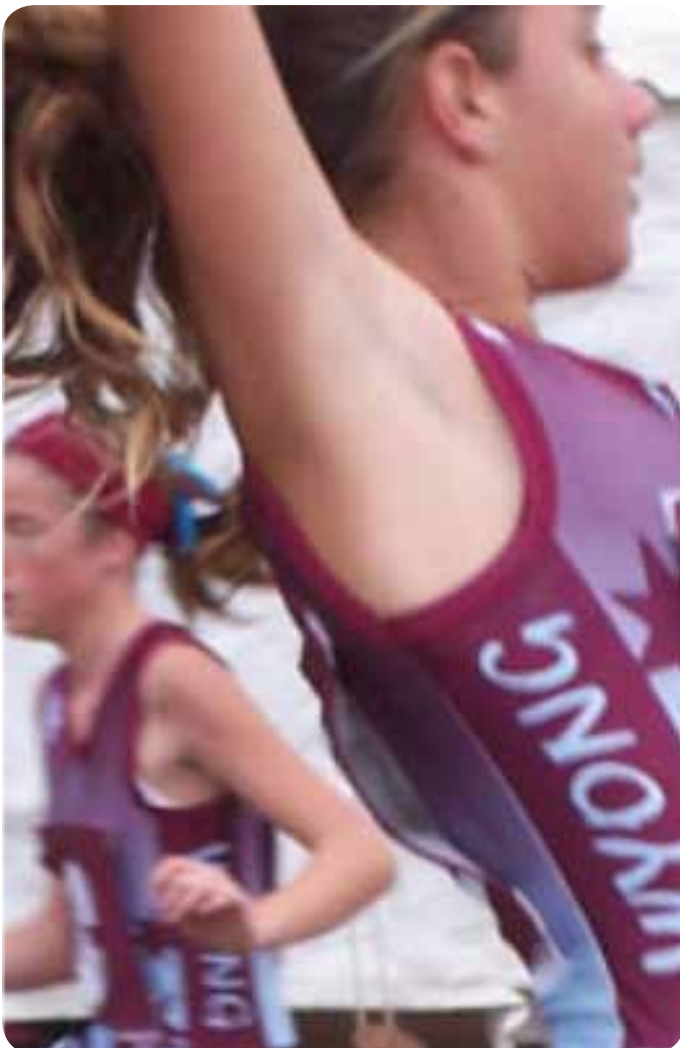
- completion of the Woongarra Sporting Facility,
- completion of the first half of a 2 year drainage and floodlight upgrade project, and
- initiation of the Hamlyn Terrace Community Centre and Sporting Facilities.

Council is working cooperatively with the local sports associations and community groups to ensure that active recreation facility maintenance is responsive to their needs whilst being achievable, sustainable and within the budget allocation.

Council is preparing key strategies to identify users, needs and actions to address Active Recreation:

- Public Facilities Service Levels Strategy, and the
- Core Asset Management Strategy.

Council's Recreation Facilities Strategy fosters healthy lifestyles by identifying and planning for the ongoing active recreation requirements for the community. In turn the Open Space and Recreation section is developing plans for upgrading recreation facilities in line with the endorsed conclusions of that strategy.



Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Active Recreation Areas

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Active Recreation Areas	N/A	Stable	Declining	Stable

The future will see an increase in the number of users of Council's Active Recreation Facilities. It is anticipated that whilst there may be requests for more diversity in the range of facilities Council offers, the mainstream sports will still dominate the requests. Council needs to review funding allocations for these facilities to reflect full lifecycle cost of the asset to maintain facilities at a reasonable level of service into the future and to avoid an unacceptable decline in the quality of our assets across all facilities, services and programs.

The population of Wyong is projected to continue to have a high number of children and teens, but also an increase its proportion of seniors. This supports the trend towards growth in low contact team sports and more socially based active recreation pursuits.

There is an identified increased demand for a hierarchy of facilities from centralised to local catchments across all active recreation pursuits as the community grows larger and more capable at the pursuit.

Women's participation will continue to grow in team sports and, combined with increased demand by seniors for masters sports, this will place increasing pressure on the provision of reserves, turf grass and court sports facilities.

There will also be an increased demand for a diversity of facilities to give better access to bushland, reserves, lakes, beaches and ocean for active recreation such as bush walking, surfing, paddling, wind and motor craft activities.

It is important to remember that active recreation is relative to the ability of the person and can occur in any setting rather than purpose built facilities. This will become more important as the population ages.

References

- Creating Active Communities, NSW Dept of Local Government 2001
- 4156.0 Sports and Physical Recreation; A Statistical Overview, Australia (2008); ABS, 2008
- Getting Australia Active, National Public Health Partnership, 2002
- Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey 2006, Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, 2007
- Wyong Shire Recreation and Sporting Facilities Strategy (2009)

Aquatic Facilities

The presence of water has been identified as the most important attribute attracting people to open space in Wyong Shire. Swimming is ranked 3rd (after walking and fitness/aerobics) most popular form of exercise in terms of participation overall.

At a Glance

The facilities that are publicly available in Wyong Shire include:

- Three swimming enclosures on the lakes at Lake Munmorah, Gwandalan and Mannering Park.
- One "ocean baths" pool at The Entrance.
- One outdoor Olympic pool at Wyong.
- Aquatic Centres at Toukley and Mingara Sport and Recreation Club
- Four hydrotherapy pools at Wyong, Berkeley Vale Private Hospital, Mingara and Toukley.
- Heated learn to swim pools at seven locations from Berkeley Vale to Gwandalan.

Council maintains The Entrance Ocean baths, Wyong pool and Toukley Aquatic Centre. Demand for these facilities remains high for schools and residential areas with increased demand by special needs groups such as disability organisations and ethnic groups with specific needs such as segregated bathing areas. The Mingara pool was developed as a partnership with Council.

Demand for leisure water will continue to grow and outstrip demand for sports based aquatic facilities. There will be an increase in demand for aquatic facilities that support active lifestyle activities for seniors. There will be increased demand for accessible facilities and for facilities that satisfy modesty requirements for specific groups.

Council is proposing to provide the Indoor Aquatic and Recreation centre as part of the development of the Warnervale Town Centre, subject to section 94 contribution funds being available.

Current State

Rating
Aquatic Facilities

2009-2010
Declining

Key Drivers

- Continued popularity of swimming.
- Increase in aquatic exercise for seniors.
- Popularity of water based leisure for inland areas.
- Legislative requirement to provide accessible facilities.
- Community benefit of providing for a diversity of needs.
- Response to increased temperatures from climate change.
- Whole of life costs for public aquatic facilities.
- The ageing of Toukley and Wyong facilities.
- Higher profitability of multi-purpose leisure based aquatic centres.
- Health benefits of swimming, particularly with high obesity levels in our population.
- Proximity to ocean – safety through learn to swim programs.

Response

During 2009-10 Council prepared a draft Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy which includes recommendations on the planning, asset management and overall provision of aquatic facilities across the Shire including planning for more accessibility and diversity in aquatic facilities. This Strategy was adopted in 2009-10.

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.8.4.1	Subject to the finalisation of the Warnervale Town Centre Masterplan, recommence work on the procurement of The Warnervale Recreation and Aquatic Centre.	Commencement of the Warnervale Recreation and Aquatic Centre is still on hold and subject to the town centre development and funding issues.

In 2009-10 Council undertook \$70,000 of Aquatic Infrastructure repairs and Council has received a lot of positive feedback about the works.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Aquatic Facilities

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
N/A	Declining	Declining	Declining

A focus on aquatic facilities is needed. If nothing is done the Shire will be left with two modern facilities - at Mingara and Warnervale (not yet built) and two major aged facilities at Toukley and Wyong. Council needs to decide on the level of asset maintenance/improvement funds to be allocated to these facilities.

The continued delay of the Warnervale Town Centre and the doubt regarding funding of the Warnervale Recreation Centre by Section 94 funding may increase residents dissatisfaction with this area of the Shire as the facilities they expected to be provided in the short to medium term will not be constructed in a reasonable timeframe.

References

- 4156.0 Sports and Physical Recreation; A Statistical Overview, Australia (2008); ABS, 2008.
- Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey 2006, Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport, 2007.
- Performance Indicators Project, CERM, 2004.
- Wingecarribee Leisure and Swimming Centres Business Plan, Piror and Cheney Pty Ltd, 2006.



Heritage

At a Glance

Wyong is rich in natural heritage. The value of these areas has been recognised with 65% of the Shire still covered in natural bushland. Much of this is in the form of National Parks/Nature Reserves, with further land protected in dedicated open space reserves.

There are some 270 registered Aboriginal Heritage sites in the Shire, most occur in the Hawkesbury sandstone region and coastal fringe and are listed on the National Parks and Wildlife Service database. Council continues to work closely with the NSW Heritage Office and the Darkinjung Aboriginal Land Council to protect these items.

Licences are required under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 for works which could impact on Aboriginal Heritage either positively or negatively (e.g. destroy or damage a site or conservation or relocation works).

Currently, there are 97 items of local European heritage significance in the Shire listed in Wyong Local Environmental Plan 1991 (Wyong LEP 1991), which date back to the early settlements in the 1820s. These include houses, barns, holiday homes, war memorials and bridges. The state of at least one privately owned local heritage item has been declining due to lack of maintenance by the owner. Council has limited power to force maintenance unlike State Heritage Items. Local heritage items power only extends as far as weed control and where the building forms a safety concern.

There are now four items listed on the State Heritage Register under the NSW Heritage Act 1977 in Wyong Shire, these include: The Entrance Ocean Pools; Hargraves House, Noraville; St Barnabas Anglican Church, Yarramalong and Norah Head Lighthouse. Any developments involving items of State significance become an integrated development and require the concurrence of the NSW Heritage Office.

Current State

Rating
Heritage

2009-2010
Stable

Both publicly and privately owned heritage sites have generally been in a stable state over the past twelve months however there has been a continued incidence of vandalism and arson to sites with heritage significance.

In 2009-10 the property at 204-214 Pacific Highway, Watanobbi known as 'The Acropolis' or 'Willyama' has been subject to vandalism including arson. This property was identified by the Wyong Shire Heritage Study 1994 as having heritage significance although subsequently not listed in Wyong LEP 1991. The Shire-wide Heritage Review currently being undertaken by David Scobie Architects has also identified the property as having heritage significance and recommended listing in Wyong LEP 2011. As with similar arson attacks in 2008, this incident serves as a reminder of the vulnerability of the Shires heritage.

Key Drivers

The main sources of pressure on the heritage of Wyong Shire continue to be:

- population growth and resultant urban development and redevelopment (e.g. The Entrance),
- increasing land values resulting in a push to maximise development potential of sites,
- development reflecting current trends rather than the existing character of the area - resulting in the loss of context and the degradation of streetscapes,
- natural processes of deterioration and potential climate change impacts,
- the limited nature of any heritage incentives or legislation to ensure preservation of local items of heritage.



Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
1.11.1.	To conserve significant items and places of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage.	A draft of the Shire-wide Heritage Review Study is close to finalisation and includes an update Thematic History, Conservation Management and Development Guidelines. Potential heritage items have been nominated and assessed for significance, which has informed a draft Heritage Inventory Database based on the Heritage Branch template. The next stage will involve briefing of Council followed by public exhibition. This project is assisted by grant funding (matching up to \$12,300) from the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning.

Council takes heritage issues into consideration both when assessing relevant development applications and when heritage items owned by Council are impacted by Council's works program. The 2003-04 audit of Council owned heritage items recommended that conservation plans and maintenance guidelines be developed for each item in accordance with the NSW Heritage Office. These have not yet commenced on any coordinated basis.

Part of the preparation of the Comprehensive LEP (commenced in 2008-09) includes a review of the Wyong LEP 1991 heritage clauses 32 to 36 and the heritage categories and listings contained in Schedule 1. The Shire-wide Heritage Review involves a review of local heritage provisions including Local Thematic History, list of Heritage Items included in the Heritage Inventory, conservation management recommendations and planning controls and guidelines. The Shire-wide Heritage Review is nearing completion and includes an Inventory Database based on the Heritage Branch template.

Recognising that the management and protection of places of aboriginal cultural significance primarily falls under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, which is administered by the Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water (DECCW), the focus of the Heritage Review in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage is 'post-contact' Aboriginal heritage.

As part of the Shire-wide Heritage Review, Norah Head Light Station Precinct will be reclassified as a heritage item of state significance under Schedule 1 – Heritage Items of Wyong LEP 1991. This will be consistent with its State listing.

Council's Cultural Plan 2005 includes a focus on 'Celebrating our History and Heritage' and recognises that 'built heritage can contribute greatly to the flavour of the environment.' Action Number 53 recommends that Council encourage and support programs that research and document the Aboriginal and post-1788 history of the Shire.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Heritage

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Heritage	Stable	Stable	Stable	Stable

While heritage sites owned and managed by Council are generally well maintained, there is a risk of incremental loss of privately owned heritage items over time. Continuing pressures from neglect, vandalism fire and other hazards will continue to reduce the numbers of existing items, although it is likely this will be offset by the listing of new items as time progresses. Generally, as development of greenfield areas becomes more limited by environmental and physical constraints, particularly due to climate change, there may be more utilisation of the Heritage Incentive provisions contained in the Wyong LEP in the future which provide flexibility for land use in return for securing ongoing maintenance for existing items.

Priority should continue to be given to items of State significance.

References

- Wyong LEP 1991- Schedule 1.
- Wyong Shire Heritage Study 1994 – Ron Howard Heritage Conservation Pty Ltd.
- NSW Heritage Act 1977.
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974.
- A Cultural Plan for Wyong Shire 2005.



Assets

2009-10

Assets

Roads and bridges

Roads and bridges are part of the land transport system of the Shire. They are comprised of many components, including land component, physical structure – vehicle and pedestrian component, utility and wildlife corridor, street lighting, street furniture and traffic control facilities. Each component provides a separate service to the community.

At A Glance

Roads are classified to indicate their ownership and funding responsibility, as follows:

State roads (Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) responsibility, maintained by RTA)

- Sydney Newcastle Freeway
- Pacific Highway

State Roads (RTA responsibility, maintained by Wyong Shire Council under contract)

- Wyong Road
- Central Coast Highway (The Entrance Road, Oakland Avenue, Coral Street, Wilfred Barrett Drive, Budgewoi Road and Scenic Drive)
- Sparks Road, Wallarah Road and Main Road

Regional roads (RTA grant funding, maintained by WSC)

- Enterprise Drive and Chittaway Road (Ourimbah end)
- Tumbi Road
- Elizabeth Bay Drive, Mimosa Road and Ourringa Street
- Wyee Road

Local roads (WSC 100% responsibility; WSC budget + grants)

- Distributor roads
- Collector roads
- Local roads
- Minor roads

Category	Total Length (km)
State road	55 km
Regional	17.5km
Local	929km
Sealed roads	1,001km
Unsealed	100km
Growth on average	8km Of additional roads (approx 1%) are added each year
Number, type and length of bridges	71 (47 concrete 24 timber) 952m in length
Length of paved footpath	211km
Length of kerb and gutter	898km
Bus shelters	190
Sealed, unsealed and multi-storey car parks owned and operated by Council	244

Benchmarks are used to measure the condition of roads. Council uses a system developed by SMEC Corporation to measure the average pavement condition index (PCI) as one measure of road quality. This is an index that ranges down from a maximum score of 10. Pavement indices are classified as good if they are greater than 7. They are classified as fair if they are between 4 and 7 and poor if they are between 1 and 4. Council had a target of achieving an average pavement condition index of 4.5 (fair) in 2009-10. This target was set in recognition of the historic level of funds available for road maintenance. The current average PCI of 4.8 achieved by Council is lower than that achieved by the majority of other similar large, rapidly growing NSW Council users of the SMEC Pavement Management system. (Note: The PCI calculation is heavily dependant on the data collection method used by each council and therefore comparisons are indicative only).

Council also measures the average roughness of the road network as a condition index. Roughness is a technical measure related to the longitudinal profile of the road surface and is generally an indication of the underlying pavement deterioration. A measure of between 30 and 60 is classified as very good, between 60 and 120 is good, between 120 and 180 is fair, between 180 and 240 is poor and between 240 and 300 is very poor. Council had a target of 141 (fair) average roughness of its road network in 2009-10. The current (achieved) average roughness of 135 for Council's roads is comparable to most similar councils. Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive audit of the Shire roads using specialist laser equipment, resulting in more accurate measurements. This is being done in a staged process with 25% of the network captured each year. The process will be completed in 2012-13 and then a more reliable trend in roughness will be able to be formulated.

Council has recently undertaken a change in direction with its historical roads expenditure focus. Modelling of the Council's Pavement Condition Index based on current expenditure and historical priorities towards rebuilding roads to higher standards e.g. wider roads, kerb and gutter, roundabouts etc indicated that the average pavement condition index would continue to decline prior to stabilisation around the lower end of the fair range. By allocating a greater proportion of funds to pavement renewal and resealing works, as opposed to upgrade works, the average pavement condition index shows a turnaround within around 5 years to the upper end of the fair range. Council implemented this new focus from July 2009 onwards.

Current State

Rating
Roads & Bridges

2009-2010
Stable



Key Drivers

- Population growth and development resulting in increased number of roads and associated traffic volumes, traffic congestion and deteriorating pavement condition.
- Increasing cost of road works at a rate greater than the rate pegging index.
- Ageing infrastructure.
- Increasing expectations from the community on road standards with particular comparison on the quality of roads created in new development works with roads built many years ago.
- Lack of availability of alternative forms of transport.

Response

Ref.	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
4.1.3.1	Complete the annual Road Maintenance & Rehabilitation Works Programs.	The 2009-10 maintenance rolling works programs were completed. A small number of capital works projects were deferred during the course of the year in response to design and approvals issues.
4.1.4.2	Continue the road assets "community pride" initiative.	The programmed maintenance of priority road reserve locations, including Shire and village entry points was completed in 2009-10.
Key Focus Area	Pacific Highway	<p>Tuggerah The RTA has agreed that the Pacific Highway/Wyong Road intersection is strategically important. However, there remains no commitment from the RTA for improvements to this intersection. The State Government has allocated \$1.0 million in 2010-11 to continue planning for this intersection upgrade which is now being incorporated into the State Government's plans for the Tuggerah Town Centre.</p> <p>Wyong The RTA has carried out further design work. Council staff advised a number of issues that need to taken into account such as: right turn movements to and from Howarth St and right turns into and out of the Town Centre (Council Office, Court House and Wyong Central Plaza). Because of the additional traffic analysis required, the RTA is unable to give any indication as to when it is likely to have a proposal for public exhibition.</p> <p>Ourimbah The Stage 2 (Burns Road to Glen Road) construction contract commenced in June 2008 and was opened to traffic in January 2010.</p>





Council recognises the following appropriate response options:

- seal unsealed roads.
- seek additional funds for roadworks.
- develop sound asset management systems.
- lobby for increased public transport services.
- allocate a greater portion of Council's budget to roads.

Key funding from Federal/State and Local Governments for the Central Coast in recent times include:

- \$85.3 million for major road infrastructure projects.
- \$20.7 million to maintain existing road infrastructure.
- \$17.6 million to improve road safety and traffic management, including \$14.4 million for the completion of the Central Coast section of the F3 traffic emergency plan.
- \$1.6 million for regional road safety initiatives.

Key initiatives for Wyong Shire include:

- \$14.4 million to complete the Central Coast sections of the F3 traffic emergency plan.
- \$5.5 million to complete the upgrading of the Pacific Highway to four lanes from Tuggerah to Wyong.
- \$1 million to continue the planning for the major upgrade of the Pacific Highway intersection with Wyong Road at Tuggerah.
- \$15.6 million to complete the upgrading of the Pacific Highway to dual carriageway between Glen Road and Burns Road at Ourimbah.
- \$2.5 million for the planning of the Pacific Highway upgrading from Lisarow to Ourimbah.
- \$500,000 to continue the planning for the upgrade of the Pacific Highway through Wyong Town centre.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Roads & Bridges

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Declining	Declining	Stable	Stable

The current response to the key drivers by all levels of government will lead to:

- Council accepting a maintenance responsibility for an increasing asset base.
- Slow progress will be made in sealing unsealed roads.



Drainage

Drainage infrastructure is linked to other key State of the Shire issues - safety (through emergency access for essential services, flood mitigation and safe design), transport (as part of the road structure and to provide flood free travel), biodiversity (through stormwater quality and pollution reduction) and air and climate (through the impact of more extreme rain events as a result of climate change).

At A Glance

The stormwater drainage network is the system of open drains, piped drains, culverts, wetlands and pollution control structures that collect transport and treat stormwater runoff.

It is provided to minimise flood hazard, avoid property damage, avoid soil erosion and protect the quality of the receiving waters to which the runoff finally flows. The stormwater drainage network consists of:

Piped drains	415km
Culverts and channels	35km
Flood mitigation basins	35
Wetlands	25
Gross pollutant traps	152
Pits, inlets and junctions	15,984
Headwalls	798
Many natural water courses and drains	

Current State

Rating	2009-2010
Roads & Bridges	Stable

Key Drivers

- Population growth which will result in increasing paved areas and therefore increased volumes of stormwater runoff.
- Funding limitations - the cost of drainage works and maintenance is increasing at a rate greater than the rate pegging index.
- Ageing infrastructure.
- Increasing expectations from the community on the standard of drainage provided, with particular comparison on the quality of networks created in new development works and that of systems that were created many years ago.
- The impact of climate change, especially higher sea levels and more intense rainfall events.

Response

Ref.	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
4.2.1.1	Complete the Drainage Works Program giving priority to Category 1 (habitable rooms) & Category 2 (non-habitable rooms) flooding issues.	The 2009-10 amended drainage capital rolling works program was completed.

The aim of Council's actions in relation to drainage across the Shire is to:

- minimise the impact of flooding/inundation.
- improve the quality and quantity of stormwater discharging from the network.
- maintain the existing stormwater systems to ensure serviceability.

Council's Rolling Works Program includes capital projects which upgrade and expand current drainage assets. There are two focuses with respect to capital project prioritisation:

- Drainage works are often undertaken in conjunction with road rehabilitation projects. Where Council has identified the need for significant road rehabilitation, the associated drainage infrastructure is also investigated for improvements.
- The resolution of Category 1 (habitable rooms) & Category 2 (non-habitable rooms) flooding issues is the primary focus. Where inundation of this nature is recognised, investigation and prioritisation is undertaken.

Council is carrying out a detailed inspection of its drainage network to accurately ascertain its condition and the hydraulic capacity of the network. An Asset Management System is currently being prepared by staff to identify, monitor and model the condition of the entire drainage network. It is anticipated that the establishment of this system and inspection regime will enable an accurate forecast of future funding requirements.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Drainage

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Drainage	N/A	Stable	Stable	Stable

Through Council's current budget and resource allocations it is anticipated that the existing drainage network will continue to operate at a less-than-optimal standard. This means that the resolution of Category 1 and Category 2 flooding occurrences may not occur until after 2025, and other undersized systems (although not causing significant flooding) will remain unimproved.

Improvements in the stormwater system are anticipated following the completion of the network inspections as greater knowledge regarding the condition and maintenance requirements of piped drainage will be known. These inspections will need to be carried out cyclically in the future, and funding will be required accordingly. The Stormwater Levy funding will provide funding to improve parts of the drainage system as long as the levy is maintained.

The operating budget for Council's drainage assets will come under considerable strain into the future. The requirements for drainage maintenance expenditure is increasing significantly as a result of a increasing asset base and the construction of Water Sensitive Urban Design features which typically have higher maintenance costs than traditional hard engineering drainage assets. The effects of rising sea and lake levels will also impact directly upon the drainage network.



Water Supply

At A Glance

The water supply service for Wyong Shire is provided by Wyong Shire Council under the Water Management Act 2000. An integrated joint water supply system comprising common water sources and Headworks infrastructure within Wyong Shire and Gosford City Council areas services the Central Coast although each Council is responsible for water distribution within its respective area.

At present strategic coordination of the water source and Headworks infrastructure is overseen by the Gosford Wyong Councils Water Authority (GWCWA). The Authority is empowered to recommend to the two Councils various strategies relating to the management of the Central Coast's water catchments, dams, weirs, water treatment, major distribution facilities and policies.

The cost of construction, operation and maintenance of the joint Headworks is shared by the two Councils. Each Council is responsible for costs associated with its own water supply distribution infrastructure.

In 2006 the State Government introduced the Central Coast Water Corporation Act 2006 to enable the creation of a single water authority for the Central Coast replacing the Gosford and Wyong Councils (as water authorities) and the GWCWA.

Following several joint meetings with both Gosford and Wyong Councils during 2009-10, an agreement has been reached with the Minister for Water Utilities to amend the Central Coast Water Corporation Act 2006. The Minister's agreement is now subject to Cabinet approval. Recent advice from the NSW Office of Water is that Cabinet has approved the amendments to the draft and will put it to Parliament for adoption in late 2010.

A project team will be formed to assist in the transition to the new Water Corporation when the legislation is amended. A steering committee comprising the two General Managers will oversee the project team consisting of a Project Manager and internal staff from both Wyong Shire and Gosford City Councils including Human Resources Management and communications.

The Central Coast water supply sources water from a range of streams, dams, groundwater bores and transfers from Hunter Water. The key supply sources are; Wyong River, Ourimbah Creek, Mooney Mooney Creek and Mangrove Creek. There are three storage dams in the system Mangrove Creek Dam (190,000 ML capacity) Mardi Dam (7,400 ML capacity) Mooney Mooney Dam (4,600 ML capacity). Significant investments have been made in recent years to reduce the demand on the town water supply through the provision of rainwater tanks, recycled treated effluent, stormwater harvesting and demand management programs. Across the Central Coast unrestricted average daily demands range from 80 ML/day in winter to over 120 ML/day in summer.

Population and Annual Water Usage Projections

Year	2011	2016	2021	2026
WSC Population	150,338	162,856	175,264	187,624
Gosford	170,090	174,783	180,384	186,645
WSC Usage ML*	12,713	15,888	16,849	17,792
Gosford Usage ML	14,356	17,284	17,710	18,200

* Based on IWCM estimated unrestricted average year demands



Population Served by Water Supply

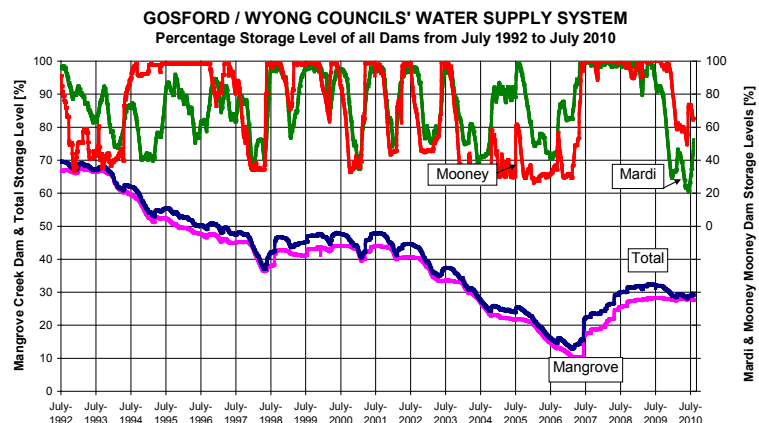
Water Supply	150,000
Sewerage Services	140,000
Visitor Population Served	>200,000/year
Residential Properties Served – water	Over 60,000
Non-residential Properties Served - water	3,150
Volume of Water Treated	12,000 ML/year
Volume of Wastewater Treated	11,500 ML/year
Dams	3 (Storage capacity : 202,000 ML)(Total for Joint Water Authority)
Water Treatment Plants	1 – Mardi(Maximum capacity 160 ML/day)
Ground Water Extraction (across Central Coast system)	(9 ML/day capacity)
Length of Water Mains	160km trunk, and 960km reticulation
Water Reservoirs	22
Water Pumping Stations	19
Number of Employees (Water & Sewerage)	171
Annual Turnover	\$52m
Total Asset Value (Water & Sewerage)	\$839m

Rainfall in the catchment areas of Wyong Shire has been below average for 11 of the last 16 years which resulted in the worst water supply drought in the region's history. Rainfall data shows the variation in rainfall across the Central Coast over the past five years. Above average rainfall for 2008 and the first half of 2009 has brought consistently higher stream flows permitting water to be drawn from the streams as required to keep Mardi Dam and Mooney Mooney Dams generally full.

Rainfall Data – Central Coast 2004-2009

	Mangrove Creek Dam	Norah Head	Gosford
	(Average - 917mm 1982-2009)	(Average - 1230mm 1969-2009)	(Average -1328mm 1918-2009)
Year	Actual rainfall (mm)	Actual rainfall (mm)	Actual rainfall (mm)
2004	740.8	1112.2	1002.8
2005	746.6	900	1118.4
2006	678.5	1061	1027.6
2007	1439.3	1555.6	2152.4
2008	1202	1354	1718
2009	716.3	857.2	1231.2

The amount of water in Central Coast storages was 29% (as at June 2010). The graph below shows percent storage levels for the region's dams over nearly 20 years.





Due to the extended period of below average rainfall and associated impacts on the streamflows and storage levels the Central Coast has been on water restrictions since February 2002. Improvement in the water supply storage levels has seen the introduction of amended to level 3 water restrictions in June 2009.

The condition of water supply assets is assessed using a "service index". The index ranges from a score of 1 ("as new") to a score of 5 ("no longer serviceable"). The bulk of the assets have a service index of 3 or better. Water mains have a design life of 60 years for asbestos cement pipes and 80 years for all other material types. The average service index of Council's water mains is 2.45 and their average remaining life is 36 years.

Council is increasingly reusing tertiary treated effluent and harvested stormwater for non-potable uses such as watering golf courses, toilet flushing within Council's amenities, municipal watering and construction activities. Additional water supply sources are likely to become increasingly more expensive as the more cost effective sources have been developed. At present approximately 8% of treated sewage effluent is used for non potable uses.

Analysis of Wyong's water usage indicates that water consumption per household is declining. Wyong has one of the lowest water consumption figures per household in NSW (141 kL/yr vs. a State median of 175 kL/yr for 2008-09).

During 2009-10 Council has continued to work towards securing the Shire's water supply by implementing medium-term strategies and longer-term strategies to ensure a sustainable water supply, whilst maintaining a level of service acceptable to our customers and the provision of this level of service at a cost comparable to other local water utilities.

Current State

Rating
Water Supply

2009-2010
Improving

Key Drivers

- Population growth over next 25 to 50 years.
- Climatic conditions and climate change.
- Community service level expectations and their affect on planning and operations of water supply function.
- Legislative and regulatory requirements in relation to the Water Authority, water quality standards, environmental flows, monitoring and review.
- Funding required investments in responding to increasing demand for water supply services and provision of environmental flows.
- Diversification of water sources in response to increased water demands (population growth) and climate change.
- Managing public health issues related to diversified sources.

Response

Ref.	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
4.3.1.1	Continue the current bulk water supply security program.	A number of tenders have been awarded in 2009. Projects include: Mardi Dam Transfer System, Mardi High Lift Pump Station, Mardi Dam Spillway and Bridge, Mardi High Voltage Ring Main, High Voltage Power Supply Upgrade.
4.3.1.2	Continue implementation of WaterPlan 2050 strategies focussing on: demand management and development of Mardi Dam to Managrove Creek Dam transfer system.	The following progress/milestones are reported for the Mardi to Mangrove link (up to June 2010): - Completion of geotechnical investigations by July 2009. - Completion of all design and documentation by August 2009. - Award of construction contract by December 2009. - Completion of construction contract by January 2011. - Commissioning and project handover by June 2011.



During 2009-10 Council has implemented various short-term contingency actions through the GWCWA to secure the water supply. These include:

- Developing water recycling and ground water schemes.
- A range of demand management initiatives.
- Increasing the capacity to transfer water from the Hunter Water Corporation.
- Upgrading the existing surface water supply system.

The Councils have also developed a long-term water supply strategy (Water Plan 2050) to meet future needs. This strategy provides for:

- Enhancement of the existing water supply system by upgrading the Wyong River to Mardi Dam transfer system.
- Construction of a pump station and main linking Mardi Dam and Mangrove Creek Dam.
- Conducting Water Saving Incentive Programs: Rainwater Tank Rebate Program, Washing Machine Rebate Program, Refit Kit / Retrofit Programs, rainwater tanks in Schools.
- Effluent reuse and the use of alternate water sources such as storm water where cost effective.
- Flexible approach to meeting future water needs by regular reviews to consider emerging technologies and opportunities such as indirect potable reuse of sewage effluent and desalination.
- On going negotiations with the Hunter Water Corporation in relation to the development of the proposed Tillegra Dam as a regional asset servicing both the Hunter and Central Coast.

While the Federal Government has funded \$80.3 Million of the Mardi to Mangrove link, the Councils will still need to meet a shortfall of about \$45 Million. This, together with costs (in excess of \$100m) spent on drought management and medium term contingency works has placed considerable financial pressure on the Councils. These increasing pressures on expenditure have occurred at a time when income is down due to reduced water sales as a result of water restrictions.

Council:

- has budgeted to progressively upgrade its treatment plants to cope with new standards and increased consumption from a growing population.
- is installing tertiary treatment systems for the effluent from the sewage treatment plants to enable effluent reuse.
- is progressively refurbishing and upgrading its water mains, reservoirs and pumping stations.
- is planning to extend the network to service the new growth areas at Warnervale.

Council is also undertaking a number of actions to address water supply across the Shire:

- continuing to implement WaterPlan 2050.
- continuing implementation of best practice methods to achieve productivity.
- improving with the regulatory environment.
- continuing community programs through schools, Water Week, community days, residential retrofits of water

- efficient devices.
- helping to formulate Water Management Plans for major users.
- monitoring and selectively extending alternative water resource substitution programs including rainwater tanks, effluent reuse, groundwater and stormwater harvesting.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Water

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Declining	Stable	Improving	Improving

Climate change has the potential to reduce the availability of water on the Central Coast necessitating the development of alternative water supply sources not as dependent on climatic conditions. Water conservation and efficient use of water will continue to be important in ensuring a secure water supply system. Sustainability issues will continue to be key drivers in the development and provision of water supply services. The net effect of many of the available options is that water services are likely to cost more due to increasing environmental protection costs and as more expensive water sources are tapped.

Provided appropriate water charges are approved by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPaRT), Wyong Shire will have a water supply system with the capacity to service its growing population and produce high quality and safe drinking water through a well maintained system.

References

- WaterPlan 2050 Brochure
- <http://www.gwcwater.nsw.gov.au/>





Sewerage System

Sewerage infrastructure provides Wyong Shire with sustainable and cost effective sewerage services that meet modern service standards. The services are environmentally sensitive, promote ecological sustainability and protect public health.

The service has significant interrelationships with the quality of the local environment (through the quality of the treated effluent when it is returned to the ocean) and the economy (through the capacity to service new development).

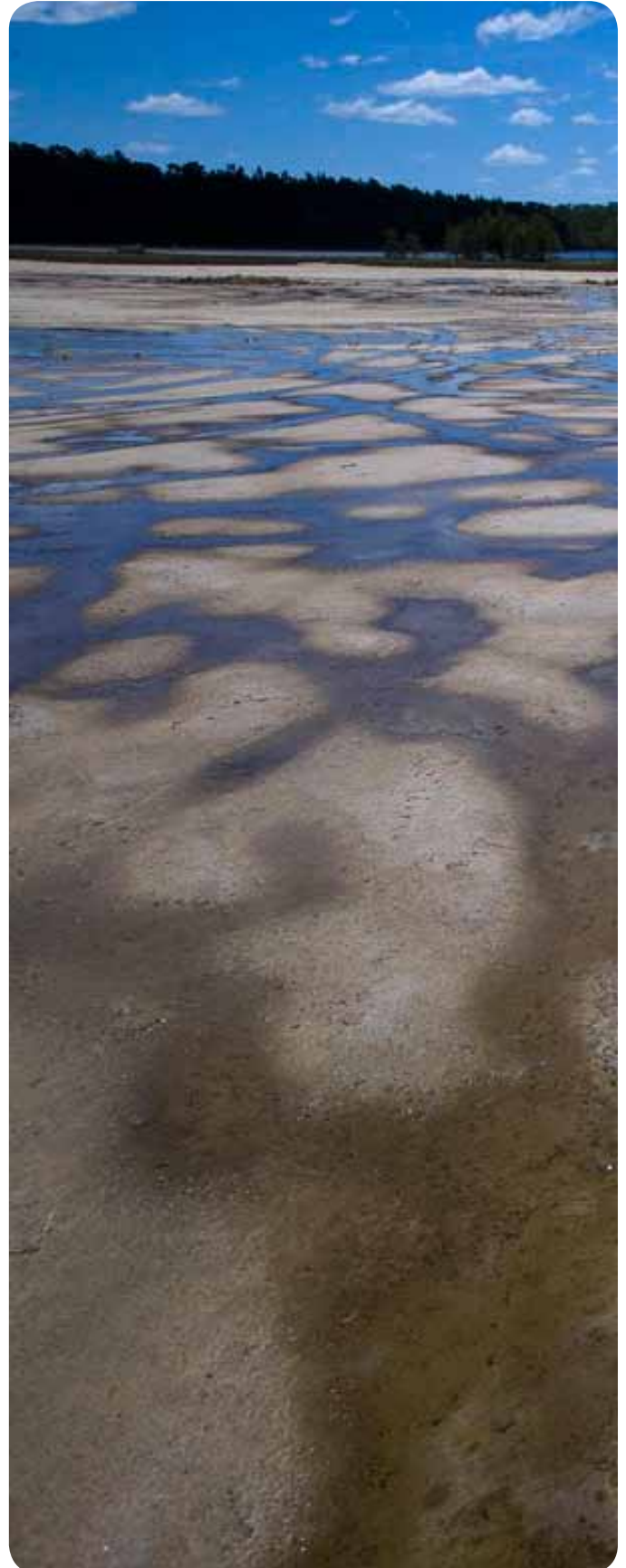
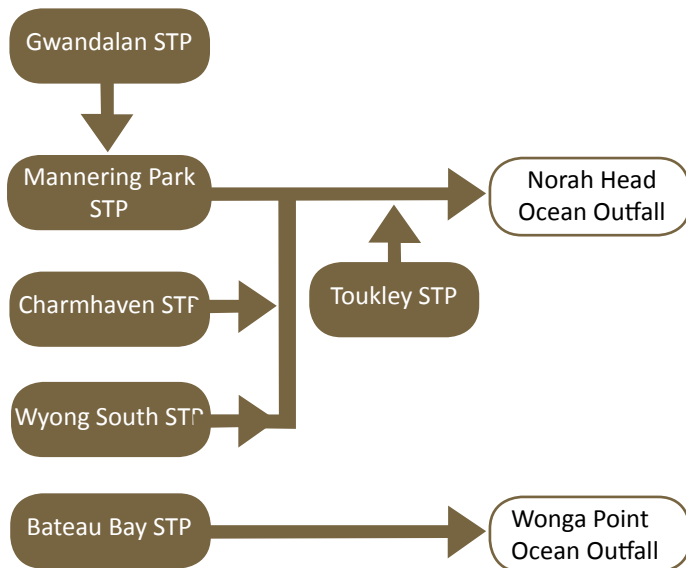
At A Glance

Council provides sewerage services to a permanent population of approximately 149,400 via over 60,000 assessments. Approximately 13,000 ML of wastewater is treated annually. Council has no sewerage provision backlog in urban areas.

Sewage is collected via a reticulation system consisting of over 1,200 km of 150mm to 1,050mm mains. Sewage flows through 149 pumping stations, from six sewerage treatment plants. These provide either secondary treatment to sewage effluent discharged to the ocean at Wonga Point and Norah Head or higher level tertiary treatment for effluent reused for non potable uses.

The following diagram and table illustrate the key principles of the sewerage system for Wyong.

Elements of the Sewerage System for Wyong





Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP)	Capacity (people)		Process	Areas Served
	Current	Planned		
Gwandalan	12,000	18,000	Intermittently decanted extended aeration	Gwandalan, Summerland Point
Mannering Park	12,000	36,000	Intermittently decanted extended aeration	Mannering Park, Chain Valley Bay, Elizabeth Bay and Lake Munmorah
Charmhaven	40,000	120,000	Intermittently decanted extended aeration	Charmhaven, San Remo, Blue Haven, Doyalson and Warnervale
Wyong South	40,000	64,000	Intermittently decanted extended aeration	Wyong, North Wyong, Tuggerah, Ourimbah, Chittaway, Tacoma, Berkeley Vale and Tumbi Umbi
Bateau Bay	57,600	65,000	Trickling filter and activated sludge	Bateau Bay, The Entrance, The Entrance North, Long Jetty, Blue Bay, Toowoan Bay and Killarney Vale
Toukley	41,400	50,000	Trickling filter	Toukley, Gorokan, Kanwal, Tuggerawong, Wyongah, Buff Point, Norah Head and Norville

To conserve water, Council is increasingly reusing some treated effluent for non-potable uses, such as watering golf courses and playing fields and for construction activities. In 2009-10 Council distributed 1,024ML of tertiary treated effluent for non-potable use.

Council uses a modern Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system for network control, monitoring, recording and performance reporting.

The condition of Council's sewerage assets generally is assessed using a "service index". The index ranges from a score of 1 ("as new") to a score of 5 ("no longer serviceable"). The bulk of the assets have a service index of 3 or better. The average service index for Council's sewer mains is 2.15 and the average remaining life is 37 years.

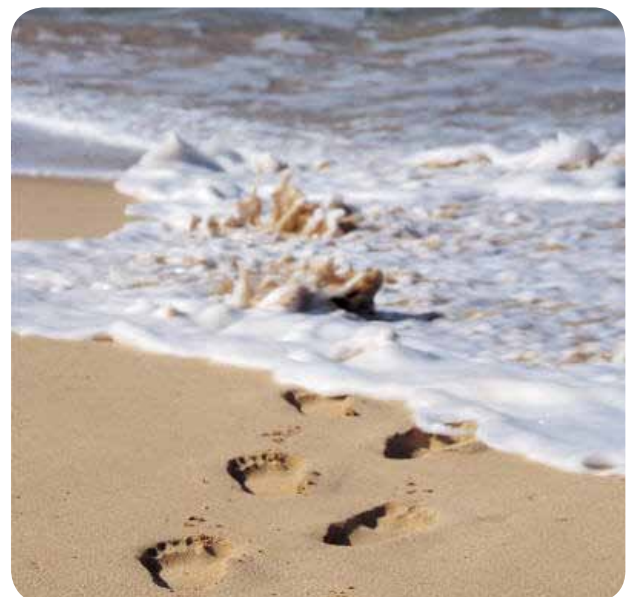
Current State

Rating
Sewerage

2009-2010
Stable

Key Drivers

- Population growth and continued development.
- Compliance with new and more stringent public health and environmental standards.
- Increasing use of recycled effluent to offset potable water use, balanced against public health considerations.





Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
4.4.2.1	Continue implementation of WaterPlan 2050 relating to Effluent Re-use schemes.	<p>A key component of Waterplan 2050 is the ongoing development and implementation of recycled water projects where practicable and cost effective.</p> <p>An extension of the existing Toukley effluent reuse scheme is still in the preconstruction stage. This work involves installation of pipe work and supporting pumping capacity to distribute treated effluent for non potable purposes from Toukley Golf Club to Slade Park, Halekulani Bowling Club, Halekulani oval and Budgewoi Soccer Club.</p>

Council is:

- progressively upgrading its treatment plants to cope with new standards and increased load from a growing population.
- extending existing effluent reuse systems.
- progressively refurbishing and upgrading its sewerage mains and pumping stations.
- extending the sewerage network to service new growth areas such as Warnervale.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Sewerage

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Stable	Stable	Stable	Stable

The majority of the sewerage system is relatively new and in the past has required relatively low levels of refurbishment expenditure. As the system ages, significant increases in refurbishment expenditure will be required and prices will need to increase to meet this cost. This means that continued investment to support the increasing demand for sewerage services is required.

Environmental and community service level expectations are increasingly influencing and affecting the planning and operations of the sewerage function. This will also impact further costs and prices.



Waste Management

Solid waste is defined as material residue or by-product discarded during or after resource extraction, production and/or consumption. The amount of solid waste generated depends on a range of factors with the most significant ones being community attitudes and values, socio-economic make-up of the community and the health of the economy being the most significant ones.

At a Glance

Waste collection and recycling services in the Shire are provided under a contractual arrangement. The current collection services commenced on 1 February 2008 and will expire on 31 January 2018. The services provided include the collection of waste, recyclable materials, garden vegetation, bulk kerbside material, litter bin waste and some commercial waste. All waste collected is disposed of at the Buttonderry Waste Management Facility (BWMF).

All residential properties in the Shire are provided with a 140 litre Mobile Garbage Bin (MGB) for waste collection and a 240 litre MGB for recycling. All households east of the Freeway (F3) are also provided with a 240 litre MGB for garden vegetation. The waste bin is serviced weekly and the recycling and vegetation bins are serviced fortnightly on alternate weeks. Commercial customers can be provided with the standard recycling bin, standard vegetation bin and waste bins of varying sizes.

The BWMF is located on Hue Hue Road, Jiliby, 120ha of the site has DA approval for landfilling, with only approximately 25ha used at the present time. It has an expected total landfill life of approximately 45 years. Approximately 140,000 tonnes of waste are land filled per annum at the BWMF. Ancillary activities include crushing of concrete (4,000t/yr) for operational reuse, collection of scrap metal (1,300t/yr) for recycling and processing of organics (40,000t/yr).

There are eight closed landfills in the Shire - Bateau Bay, Mardi, Gwandalan, Shelly Beach, Tumbi Umbi, Toukley, Warnervale and North Entrance. The North Entrance site is no longer in Council's ownership and is now used as a golf course with adjoining sites developed for residential and commercial uses. All closed landfills are classified as potentially contaminated land under the Contaminated Lands Act and Council is required to investigate the sites and undertake rehabilitation works (if required) in order to minimise environmental impacts. Council has a program in place to rehabilitate these sites over the next seven years.

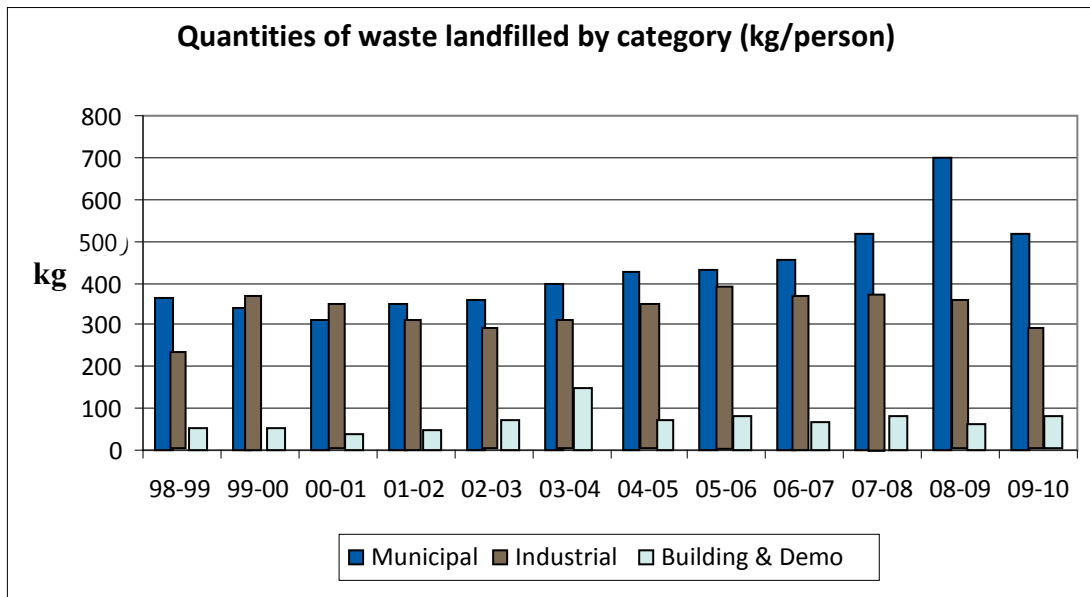
The community is now taking a more active role in addressing litter and waste issues through involvement in initiatives such as Clean Up Australia Day activities, Landcare groups and Tidy Towns. Council's Community Pride Program also generates a strong interest in waste management.

Australia is the third-highest generator of waste in OECD countries (ABS, 2007). In 2007-08, the waste disposal rate in NSW was about 1,100kg/person/year (NSW SOE 2009). In Wyong the disposal rate in 2009-10 was 887kg/person/year. The following table and graph shows disposal rates in Wyong between 1998-99 and 2009-10.

Quantities of waste landfilled by category 1998-99 to 2009-10

Year	Municipal		Commercial and Industrial		Construction and Demolition		Total landfilled	
	Tonnes	Kg per person	Tonnes	Kg per person	Tonnes	Kg per person	Tonnes	Kg per person
98-99	46,349	364	41,696	328	6,297	52	94,342	741
99-00	44,265	339	47,896	367	6,853	55	99,014	759
00-01	41,642	311	46,495	347	4,637	36	92,775	693
01-02	47,840	350	42,398	312	6,655	49	96,893	709
02-03	50,036	361	41,247	298	10,161	73	101,444	732
03-04	55,341	395	42,887	306	20,655	148	118,883	849
04-05	60,047	426	43,581	309	10,027	71	113,654	806
05-06	61,075	430	55,269	389	11,695	82	128,039	901
06-07	65,136	454	53,160	371	9,808	68	128,105	893
07-08	75,618	519	54,690	378	11,761	81	142,069	975
08-09	103,797	700	52,750	363	9,004	61	165,651	1,116
09-10	77,468	516	43,846	292	11,846	79	133,161	887
% change 09-10 to long term average		+17%		-14%		+11%		+4%

Note: The per capita tonnages in the following tables and graphs have been calculated using the Estimated Residents Population (ERP) adjusted by ABS. The per capita tonnages stated may vary slightly compared to previous SOS reports in instances where previous population numbers were updated when more accurate information became available.



Quantities of waste landfilled by category 1998-99 to 2009-10

Municipal Waste

Municipal Waste consists of domestic waste and Council waste. The increase of 17% in 2009-10 in municipal waste generated compared to the long term average is largely due to an increase in Council waste rather than domestic waste. The sharp decrease of 25% in Municipal waste between 2008-09 and 2009-10 is the result of one-off major clean up activities at two closed landfills in 2008-09. Compared to 2007-08 the increase in 2009-10 in Municipal waste was only 2% indicating that Council activities have normalised.

Under the current waste collection and recycling service introduced in 2008 a broader range of recyclables are accepted than previously and the introduction of a third bin allows the more efficient storage of recyclables. This resulted in a decrease of 4% in the domestic waste collected in 2009-10 compared to the long term average.

Commercial and Industrial Waste

Commercial and Industrial waste decreased by 14% in 2009-10 compared to the long term average with a disposal rate of 292 kg per capita/year. Compared to 2008-09, the quantity of this waste type landfilled decreased by 20% or 71 tonnes per person in 2009-10, most likely due to the impacts of the economic downturn. The introduction of the new recycling service in 2008 may have also contributed to the lower commercial and industrial waste generated in 2009-10.

Recycling options for the commercial sector under Council's recycling collection service are more flexible than previously and designated bins for recyclable materials can be provided that may

encourage greater recycling and result in an increased diversion of waste from landfill. However, commercial recyclable materials are generally produced in large quantities or are oversized (e.g. cardboard), making the use of household recycling bins inappropriate for all sites. State Government action is therefore required to create infrastructure to facilitate and encourage commercial recycling.

Construction and Demolition

Building and Demolition (B&D) waste increased by 11% in 2009-10 compared to the long term average with a disposal rate of 79 kg/person/year. The quantity of this waste stream fluctuates widely.

While the smallest component of the three waste streams, there are opportunities to recycle much of this B&D waste. However, as a large component of the building waste received at BWMF is co-mingled it cannot be diverted easily for reprocessing and is therefore destined for landfilling. A differential pricing structure is in place where mixed waste attracts the highest charge and source-separated recyclable materials receive no charge or a lower charge.

Council Waste

The following table shows the amount of waste to landfill generated from Council activities and works:

Council Waste

Year	Total tonnage (t)	Kg/person (based on Shire population)
98-99	11,293	89
99-00	6,282	48
00-01	3,194	24
01-02	2,116	16
02-03	1,970	14
03-04	3,375	24
04-05	5,514	39
05-06	4,166	29
06-07	9,961	69
07-08	20,366	140
08-09	54,567	368
09-10	26,631	177

Quantities of materials diverted from Landfill to recycling and composting 1998-99 to 2009-10.

Year	Recycled (kg/ person)	Composted (kg/ person)	Concrete (kg/ person)	Metals (kg/ person)	Total per capita (kg)
98-99	70	182			252
99-00	66	232	30		328
00-01	58	239	26		324
01-02	66	270	43	15	394
02-03	73	261	61	15	410
03-04	77	270	96	15	457
04-05	80	250	63	13	406
05-06	76	263	40	18	397
06-07	84	246	31	13	374
07-08	97	295	27	9	428
08-09	119	281	30	7	438
09-10	115	252	30	6	402
Long term average	79	237	43	12	362
09-10 compared to long term average	+45%	+6%	-31%	-52%	+11%

The quantities of Council waste is subject to significant fluctuations due to the nature of Council works. The sharp increase in 2007-08 is the result of DECCW tightening the criteria for cover that can be used for operational purposes. Some Council waste previously used for alternative purposes is now classified as waste material and therefore is included in the above figures.

Total Waste

The Shire experienced a 4% overall increase in the amount of waste landfilled in 2009-10 compared to the long-term average. However, 20% less waste was landfilled in 2009-10 compared to 2008-09.

Recycling

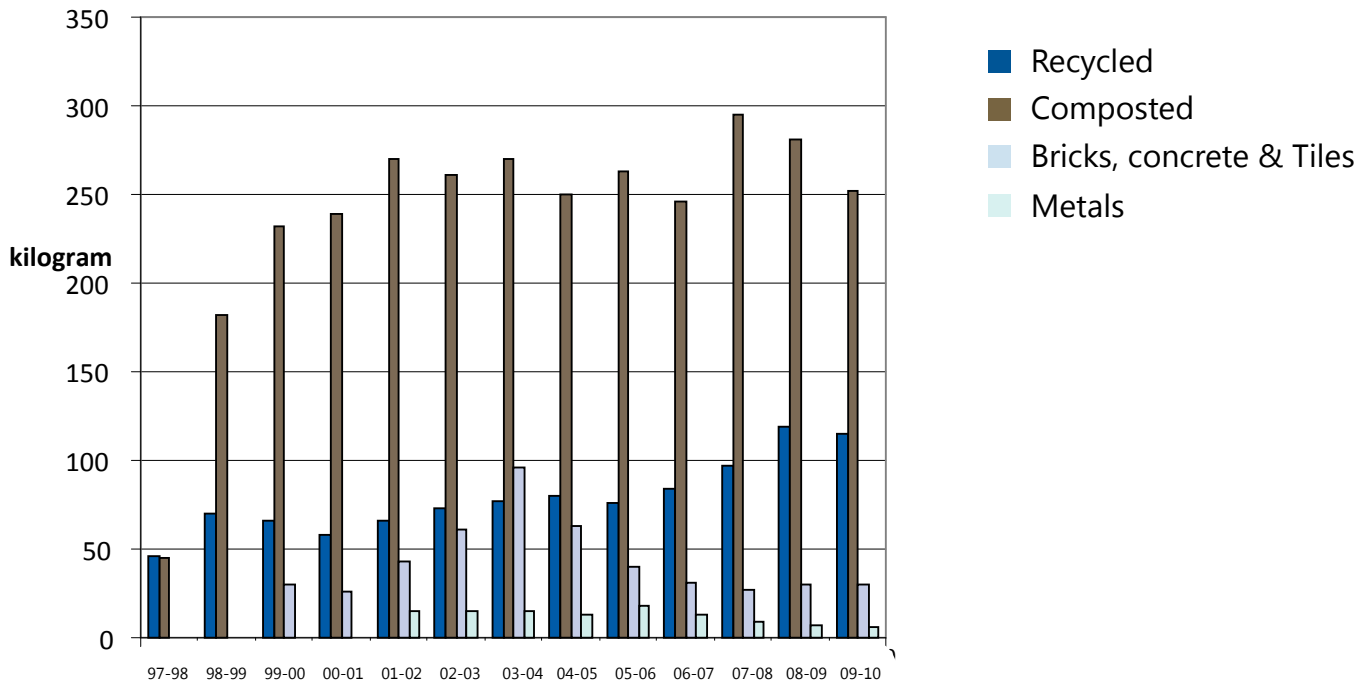
In 2006-07 the recycling rate for Sydney was 106kg/person (source NSW SOE 2009).

The following table shows the quantities of material recycled and composted between 1998-99 and 2009-10.





Quantities diverted from landfill per person (kg)



Quantities of materials diverted from landfill 1998-99 – 2009-10

The quantities of materials recycled by Wyong households in 09-10 is 45% or 36kg more than the long term average. This may be the result of the new waste collection system introduced in February 2008.

The quantities of vegetation diverted to the composting facility fluctuates from year to year due seasonal and climatic variations such as droughts and periods of wet weather.

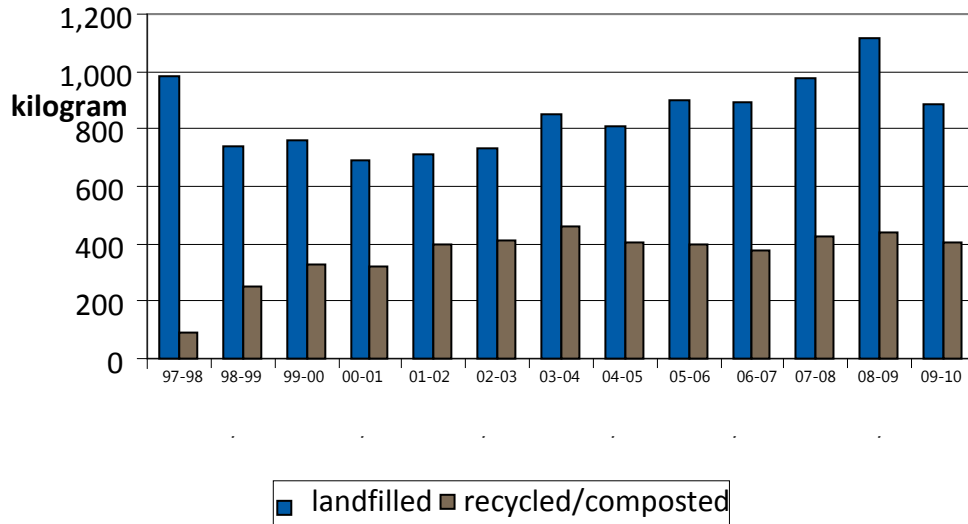
Over the last two years, BWMF has experienced a slight increase in the quantities of concrete and bricks received for recycling. This is mainly due to higher quantities received from Council's operations.

The quantities of scrap metal received have been fairly stable for many years, however a sharp decrease was observed in 2006-07 when world scrap metal prices started to increase.

The following graph shows that the upward trend in the total quantities of waste landfilled experienced between 2005-06 and 2008-09 discontinued in 2009-10 which is largely due to reduction in commercial waste received during this year and economic downturn. The quantities of materials recycled or composted remained stable at approximately 31%.



Comparison of amounts recycled and composted per person (kg)



Comparison of waste landfilled to quantities recycled between 1998-99 to 2009-10.

Waste production and disposal may place the following pressures on the environment:

- loss of natural resources contained in the waste.
- energy costs of waste transportation, disposal, recycling and composting.
- loss of habitat to landfill excavations.
- land contamination and sterilisation.
- stormwater pollution.
- surface and groundwater pollution.
- odour and particle air pollution at landfill site.
- generation of greenhouse gases.
- noise, odour, littering and other impacts on local amenities.
- contamination of bushland from illegal dumping.

Current State

Rating Waste	2009-2010 Stable
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Key Drivers

The following are the key drivers impacting the level of waste disposal and recycling in the future:

- level of levy charged by DECCW for landfill sites.
- establishment of an Alternative Waste Technology System (AWT) at BWMF.
- need to minimise emissions of greenhouse gases.
- capture and utilisation of methane gas generated by the landfill over time.
- community expectations – comprehensive and cost effective waste collection and recycling system with access to a broad range of recyclables.
- changing legislation influences work practices and procedures that in turn influence the cost of waste disposal at BWMF.

Response

Ref.	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
4.5.2.1	Finalise installation of the methane extraction system at Buttonderry Waste Management Facility.	Designs for a methane gas extraction system and power plant are completed and development approval has been obtained. Underground connection to the grid system has been completed and the installation of wells has commenced. It is anticipated that the gas collection wells will be installed in July 2010 and the power plant in early August 2010. Council will receive royalty payments from the sale of the electricity.
4.5.2.2	Commence construction of Cell 4.2B at Buttonderry Waste Management Facility.	Earthworks involving the excavation of 250,000 cubic metres of soil and rock have been completed. Placement of a sophisticated liner and leachate collection system to protect the underlying groundwater is currently in progress and it is anticipated that the new cell will be completed and operational by August 2010.
4.5.3.1	Undertake detailed design works for Gwandalan, Shelly Beach and Tumbi closed landfills.	<p>Mardi Landfill - Detailed Investigations 100% complete. Design 15% complete. Remediation Action Plan (RAP) and concept design completed. Determination of outcomes of Expressions of Interest for design tenders for all closed landfills to be finalised.</p> <p>Gwandalan Landfill - Preliminary and detailed Investigations 100% complete. Final report approved by DECCW accredited site auditor. Documentation for tenders for Remedial Action Plant (RAP) and concept design in progress. Design 0% complete.</p> <p>Tumbi Landfill - Preliminary and detailed investigations completed. Draft detailed report reviewed by DECCW accredited site auditor with final report pending. Design 0% complete.</p> <p>Shelly Beach Landfill - Preliminary Investigation and field work for detailed investigation are completed. Draft report is currently being prepared. Design 0% complete.</p> <p>Toukley closed landfill - Preliminary investigation 100% complete with report currently being reviewed by a DECCW accredited site auditor.</p> <p>Warnervale closed landfill - Preliminary investigation and detailed investigation 100% complete. Clean up of asbestos complete. Remedial Action Plan (RAP) completed.</p>

Further to the above Management Plan responses Council has undertaken a number of initiatives as follows:

Rehabilitation of Closed Landfills

Progressive rehabilitation will occur in order of priority i.e. Gwandalan (2010-13), followed by Mardi (2011-14), Warnervale (2012-14), Shelly Beach (2014-15), Tumbi Umbi (2015-16) and Toukley (2016-17).

There are a number of actions being undertaken on a number of other important strategies:

- Preparation of a long term waste strategy for BWMF that incorporates Alternative Waste Technologies (AWT). Wyong has been invited by Gosford City Council to utilise capacity it its proposed AWT scheduled for commissioning in 2013.
- Establishment of appropriate sites that have all required approvals and licenses for the temporary storage of Council waste materials suitable for re-use or recycling and/or reprocessing to maximise resource recovery and minimise landfilling and associated disposal costs.

- Prevention of illegal dumping and avoidance of illegal storage and disposal of Council waste from all operational area including Virgin Excavated Natural Materials (VENM), soils, concrete, mulches, seagrass and kelp.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Waste

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Waste	Declining	Stable	Stable	Stable

It is anticipated that in the future Council will have access to Alternative Waste Technology for municipal and some commercial waste. This will reduce the volume of waste significantly which in turn will increase the life of the landfill. In addition, an AWT system renders waste inert which means environmental risks and hazard associated with landfilling are minimised.

It is also anticipated that in the future infrastructure will be in place to facilitate recycling for commercial and industrial and building and demolition waste which will minimise the amount of waste being landfilled.



Environment

2009-10

Environment

Land

Land management issues are divided into six major landscape regions, namely highlands and valleys; coastal lowland and floodplains; coastline and the Wallarah Peninsula. Each has its own distinct issues, pressures and responses.

Highlands and Valleys

The highlands are the areas in the south and west of the Shire which form higher hills and plateaus. Large areas are protected by State Forest (Ourimbah and Wyong) and Conservation Lands. There are also farms and orchards around Kulnura, and rural residential areas around Glenning Valley and Fountaindale.

The valleys are primarily the areas west of the F3 freeway on either side of the freshwater sections of Ourimbah Creek, Wyong River and Jilliby Creek. The valleys include the water supply catchment for the Shire's drinking water and the site of the proposed Wallarah 2 Coal Project.

At a Glance

At least 65% of Wyong Shire soils continue to be protected by some form of native bushland cover including State Forests, National Parks and natural bushland; with many of these areas occurring in the valleys and highlands. It is in these and other vegetated areas such as wetlands and restored stream banks where valley soils are not declining.

The Central Coast Regional Strategy (2008 - 2031) limits expansion of the urban footprint by protecting land west of the F3 Freeway from further residential development until after 2031. This will help to protect the region's water supply catchment from inappropriate development.

In spite of this, in November 2007, a Part 3A Project Application was lodged with the Department of Planning (DoP) by the Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture (WACJV) for a proposed underground coal mine known as the Wallarah 2 Coal Project. This application proposes to extract coal from under the Dooralong and Yarralong Valleys using longwall mining techniques.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Wallarah 2 Project was placed on public exhibition by the DoP from 31 March until 2 June 2010.

In response to this public exhibition, Council engaged specialist mining, hydrogeological, geotechnical and environmental consultants to conduct an independent review of the EA. The findings of this review indicated that a number of the Director General Requirements (DGRs) had been inadequately addressed, relating to matters such as flora and fauna, waste generation and management, safety, water quality and community engagement.

Most importantly, the independent review identified that the data and modelling used to determine the impact of the proposal on the regions water supply (including surface and ground water) was technically insufficient and inaccurate. The results within the

EA indicating that there would be no effect on the regions water supply could not be supported with any level of confidence.

Council's response to the public exhibition of the EA included the full report prepared by the specialist consultants (available on Council's website) in addition to the results and comments received from a public forum held on 18 May 2010 and attended by over 200 participants.

It is expected that public hearings regarding the proposal will be held by the recently appointed Planning Assessment Commission (PAC). In addition to these public meetings, the PAC will also be reviewing the EA, submissions received in response to the EA exhibition and the impacts of the proposal on the Central Coast's water supply. The PAC will also identify the merits of the project as a whole.

The Minister for Planning, has flagged that the results of the PAC inquiries are required to be finalised by 15 October 2010.

Current State

Rating

Highlands & Valleys

2009-2010

Stable

Key Drivers

Pressures in the highlands and valleys include:

- sedimentation.
- soil and streambank erosion (due to clearing and domestic stock intrusion).
- fertilizer, sewage and chemical pollution of creeks.
- grazing and farming practices (such as chicken or turf farms).
- mining (gas and coal resources).

Response

The Wallarah 2 Coal Project application will continue to be monitored by Council and the community.

Wyong Council, in conjunction with rural landowners, local Landcare groups and with funding under the Federal Government's Caring for Our Country, rehabilitated 1 kilometre of degraded streambanks in the water supply catchment area during 09-10.

The Regulation and Compliance section of Council recorded the following pollution complaints regarding land/property. The type of pollution is not identified.



Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Number of pollution complaints (Land/property)	149	132	99	71	70

Continuing streambank rehabilitation works for the upper Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek will see an improved catchment quality. The Department of Planning's Central Coast Regional Strategy seeks to protect Wyong Shire's environmental values through limiting future development west of the F3 Freeway. A coal mine in the sensitive valleys catchment may result in a very different future scenario.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Highlands and Valleys

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Stable	Stable	Stable	Stable

References

- <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/PlanningSystem/Independentplanningassessmentandreviewpanels/tabid/70/Default.aspx>



Coastal Lowlands and Floodplains

The coastal floodplains surround the lower estuarine parts of Wyong River, Tumbi Creek, Ourimbah Creek and Wallarah Creek and the lowlands are the rolling hills which surround the floodplain. They include the expanding suburbs to the west and north of Tuggerah Lakes such as Mardi, Wyong, Watanobbi, Wadalba, Warnervale, Woongarra, Hamlyn Terrace, Halloran, Kanwal, Gorokan, Charmhaven, Blue Haven, San Remo and Doyalson. The Warnervale Town Centre and Wyong Employment Zone are situated within the lowlands.

At a Glance

Current State

Rating

Coastal Lowlands and Floodplains

2009-2010

Declining

Previous State of the Shire reports have indicated increasing pressures in the coastal lowlands and floodplains, this trend has continued in the 2009-10 reporting period and is expected to continue into the future. The most significant areas of impact on soils within the Shire are presently located within these landscape regions due to development in the catchment of the floodplains. Ongoing subdivision of greenfield areas of the lowlands causes a steady loss of their soils and bushland. Large areas of the lowlands are and will continue to be developed in the future.

Past management practices and altered and increasing stormwater inputs from new suburbs have altered the wetting and drying cycles of many natural wetlands and creeks. The impacts of hydrological changes include loss of biodiversity, deposition of silt, altered groundwater recharge, weed invasion and loss of floodplain flood mitigation capacity.

The Department of Planning are currently working on the North Wyong Shire Structure Plan, which will be the focus of future greenfield development in Wyong Shire. The North Wyong Shire Structure Plan is expected to accommodate some 19,500 dwellings (16,500 dwellings in greenfield and 3,000 within the Warnervale Town Centre).

A large residential land release proposal by Rose Group for Gwandalan and Catherine Hill Bay (Lake Macquarie City Council) was approved by the State Government in March 2009. Under this approval, 187 dwellings were scheduled to be built at Gwandalan.

In June 2009 the Gwandalan Summerland Point Action Group challenged the approval in the Land and Environment Court.

Justice Lloyd ruled on 31 August 2009 that the approvals of the Gwandalan and Catherine Hill Bay proposals were invalid. This ruling surrounded previous Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) entered into with the applicants by the former Minister for Planning, Frank Sartor,

In determining the case, Justice Lloyd ruled that:

- (a) there was a reasonable apprehension of bias of the Minister having regard to various matters including the Minister's entry into a MOU and related development deed (Deed), and
- (b) the Minister had taken irrelevant considerations into account, namely the MOU and the Deed when determining the application.

The Department of Planning did not appeal the decision, nor has retrospective legislation been introduced to enable the developments. The Rose Group proposal has since been withdrawn from the Part 3A process.

Additionally, the Gwandalan (Southern Estates) proposal by Coal and Allied for the development of approximately 600 dwellings has also been withdrawn following the ruling of Justice Lloyd. This application was also subject to an MOU with the former Minister for Planning.

Key Drivers

- development pressures that continue to cause a steady loss of soils and bushland in the lowland and floodplain areas.
- fragmentation of Endangered Ecological Communities by development.
- altered and increasing stormwater flows that threaten natural wetlands and streams.
- changes to environmental policy and legislation that will provide stronger controls over threatened vegetation.



Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.1.1.1	Finalise the Flooding Chapter of DCP 2005.	The draft DCP Chapter "Floodprone Land Development" was finalised during 2009-10 following consultation with and review by key internal stakeholders. The chapter is being developed in correlation with other Council documents, including the Climate Change Policy and Tuggerah Lakes Floodplain Risk Management Plan. A Councillor briefing was held in June 2010 and it is scheduled to go to a Council meeting for approval to place the Chapter on public exhibition by the end of 2010.
3.1.4.1	Continue to plan for the release of lands in Precinct 7A (Warnervale Village) with a view to gazettal in 2012.	The preparation of a Local Environmental Plan was supported by Council in December 2008. Consultations with Government agencies are underway to outline the issues to be addressed as part of the Local Environmental Study (LES)/LEP. Consultants have been engaged on the following projects: Aboriginal and European heritage study, traffic survey, traffic and transportation study, contaminated land and acid sulphate soil assessment, noise and vibration study, flooding and integrated watercycle management. Draft briefs for a number of other specialist consultant studies have also been prepared and consultants will be engaged for studies into flora and fauna, and the Precinct 7A masterplan shortly. Project work for the social impact assessment and open space study will be conducted using internal staff resources.

- A preliminary draft of the Tumbi Umbi Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan has been complete with Council currently reviewing and editing the draft report.
- The Tuggerah Lakes Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is currently underway. Consultations with appropriate departments within Council have been held during the initial development of the study and plan. It is anticipated that this study will go on public exhibition before the end of 2010.
- Other Floodplain Risk Management - Preparation of Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans for particular catchments in the shire will be undertaken in the near future. These are dependent on State and federal Grant funding. These studies will update Council flood studies and information that are over 10 or 20 years old however are the best source of information that Council relies upon.
- Constructed wetlands (and monitoring): Council currently maintains 16ha of constructed wetlands represented by 25 sites across the Shire at a cost of \$140,000 per annum. The primary purpose of the wetlands is to improve water quality for receiving environments downstream. The number of constructed wetlands in the Shire is planned to grow significantly over the coming years with the implementation of Water Sensitive Urban Design Principles. An intensive monitoring program is being undertaken by Council to determine how effectively these devices are removing pollutants from stormwater with the information feeding back into improved design.
- Erosion and Sedimentation Control Audits were undertaken in June 2010. The compliance levels found during the audits were an increase from the previous year's audit. Overall compliance at building sites around the Shire was found to be 80%, with compliance at subdivisions and Council works sites found to be 85%.
- Estuary Management Plan Implementation continued (see Water and Catchment Management for further details on these actions).

Other Council Actions and Programs undertaken in 2009-10:

- Draft Development Control Plan - Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) is in the final stages of development, with all appropriate departments within Council consulted throughout its development. The DCP will provide planning and development controls to protect all waterways and waterbodies such as wetlands, within in the Shire.
- Porters Creek Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Scheme which will incorporate significant stormwater harvesting from the Porter's Creek catchment, and re-use within the Porters Creek and Wyong River catchments.
- The final Lower Wyong River Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is complete and is awaiting finalisation of a Council report so that it can be considered and adopted by Council.
- The Porters Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is currently underway as part of this study, the Porters Creek Flood Study which was completed in July 2009 was revised with additional information, including recent large scale developments in the catchment.
- The draft Lower Ourimbah Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan has been completed and is awaiting Council approval to be placed on public exhibition.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Coastal Lowlands & Floodplains

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Coastal Lowlands & Floodplains	Declining	Stable	Stable	Stable

While the response to the pressures on these areas is improving there is still considerable scope for protecting bushland and floodplains through an integrated approach which combines conservation and catchment water cycle planning.

The silting of Tumbi Creek (that has been reported in previous years) is indicative of what is occurring in other catchments within the Shire. This can be expected to continue in the future with continued development, especially if management practices continue to focus on the symptoms rather than the causes of environmental problems.

Coastal & Wallarah Peninsula

Wyong Shire's coastline is the narrow strip of rocky headlands, beaches and connecting sand dunes between the ocean and Tuggerah Lakes. The coastline has the highest percentage of conservation land of any area of the Shire. The Wallarah Peninsula extends to the northern boundary of the Shire and into Lake Macquarie City Council.

At a Glance

Current State

Rating

Coastline and Wallarah Peninsula

2009-2010

Declining

Overall the ecological quality of the coastal lands is judged to be slowly declining due to ongoing residential and resort development, recreational impact, stormwater impacts and the invasion of weeds such as Bitou Bush.

Areas of Cabbage Tree Harbour and The Entrance North are still experiencing continuing slope stability and dune erosion due to storm events. Council announced (in February 2008) its intention to build a toe drainage structure to stabilise the bluff behind residents' homes as a result of coastal erosion that occurred at Cabbage Tree Harbour in the storm event in June 2007. Council has resolved a shared funding arrangement with Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW). The design and impact assessment of the stabilisation works was completed and approvals obtained in November 2009. However, costs had increased and exceeded funding, consequently the designs are currently being reviewed to reduce costs. Construction is now expected to commence in late 2010.

Key Drivers

- Increasing pressure from population growth and resultant development.
- Climate Change predicts rising sea levels and an increase in severe weather events leading to a heightened risk of coastline erosion. In 2006-07 a Tsunami warning and large storm event highlighted this issue.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.1.1.2	Prepare a draft Coastline Management Plan (including the Coastal Hazard Study)	The draft Coastline Management Plan was prepared by consultants and has been forwarded to DECCW for review; depending on their advice amendments to the Plan may be necessary. Following DECCW approval, consultation with the community during 2010-11 via the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary, Coastal & Floodplain Management Committee and Precinct Committees will be undertaken prior to submitting to Council for approval to exhibit.
3.2.3.1	Construct stormwater treatment works within the ocean and Lake Macquarie catchments.	Designs for three Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) have been completed. One GPT was constructed at Gwandalan in March 2010, another is nearing construction stage. For the ocean beaches, Cabbage Tree Bay GPT and drainage has been designed but construction deferred in response to public consultation and the need to integrate with any future boat ramp. Planning for compilation of a future stormwater works program within the ocean beaches and Lake Macquarie catchments is underway.

Coastcare and Dunecare groups continue to undertake valuable dune protection and bush regeneration works supported by Council's Landcare program. Six volunteer groups located in Budgewoi, Noraville, Norah Head and The Entrance North are restoring approximately 100ha of dune ecosystems and coastal headlands.

The primary stages of major dune restoration works at The Entrance North and southern Budgewoi Beach are complete. 16ha of Bitou Bush has been treated, 800m of foredune reshaped and fences constructed to capture sand and reduce erosion. These areas have been planted with local native coastal species and beach access points upgraded to direct pedestrian traffic through the dunes, reducing erosion and damage to regenerating vegetation.

Council is also managing funding from the Australian Government "Caring for our Country" program via the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority on behalf of four of these groups. This project includes contracted bush regeneration within sensitive plant communities in Norah Head, Budgewoi and Noraville and a significant reduction in noxious weeds over a 20ha area.

Council's preliminary Climate Change Action program incorporates a review of all planning studies to address the changing nature of climate predictions. The NSW Coastline Management Manual also requires that climate change implications are addressed in the development of the hazard zones and the Coastline Management Plan.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Coastline and Wallarah Peninsula

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Stable	Stable	Stable	Declining

of properties being adversely affected, many so much so that they will become uninhabitable. At this stage we must exercise the precautionary principle and plan accordingly. As Council understands more about the implications of climate change it can adapt planning controls to avoid situations in the future that will be unsustainable. Council is also developing a Climate Change Policy for adoption in 2010-11.

The Coastline and Wallarah Peninsula will continue to be placed under development pressure due to population growth. The number and type of rezonings that occur will have a significant affect on this area.

At present there is uncertainty about the rate at which climate change projections may occur and their potential impacts. Future predictions of sea level rise and increased storm activity due to climate change suggest there is a risk of continued and increased erosion of the dune and bluff systems in years to come. As this occurs it will potentially result in a significant number



Catchment Management

Wyong Shire has a number of significant waterways including wetlands, creeks, lakes and the ocean. They and their catchment are closely studied and monitored and work is undertaken to continually improve their management. Research confirms that whatever people do in the catchment has an impact on the health of the downstream waterways such as lakes, creeks and wetlands. These areas also play a significant role in the economic and recreational life of many residents across the Shire that contributes to their overall quality of life.

Lakes

At a Glance

Tuggerah Lakes estuary consists of three interconnected shallow lagoons: Tuggerah Lake, Budgewoi Lake and Lake Munmorah. They are largely isolated from the ocean and are the receiving water bodies at the bottom of the catchment.

Current State

Rating
Lakes

2009-2010
Stable

Previous State of the Shire reports have indicated declining trends for the condition of the Lakes. With the implementation of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan (EMP) and other works in the Shire the condition of the lakes are currently considered to be stable.

Council, in partnership with the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) undertakes the Beach Watch program – reporting monthly on recreational water quality at 29 popular swimming locations in the Shire. In total 17 ocean beaches, 9 coastal lake sites and 3 estuarine river sites were tested weekly for contamination using the faecal indicator organism enterococci. These results are used to assess compliance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water (NHMRC 2008).

Since 1999, the majority of the 29 sites monitored achieved a high level of compliance with the NHMRC 2008 guidelines. At times however, some of the 12 estuarine sites have been found to have high faecal indicator levels, particularly the estuarine river sites (Tumbi Creek, Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek). There are consistently high levels of faecal indicator organism found at these three sites. These three sites along with seven sites throughout the Tuggerah Lakes system were monitored in 2008 using faecal sterol analysis. All ten sites had results that indicated Council's sewage infrastructure is not a source of these high faecal indicator levels.

The number of people volunteering in Landcare, Bushcare, Coastcare and Dunecare groups to restore natural areas continues to increase, with several new groups joining the Landcare network in 2009-10.

Active Landcare Groups

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
No. of Groups	18 (approx 31 Sub groups)	34	32	32	36	41
No. of Sites	43	54	51	51	47	52

An additional staff member has been employed on a temporary basis to increase the level of support provided to these groups. Council also provided resources for 20 Landcare groups, including project materials such as native plants, tools, personal protective equipment, contracted bush regeneration and material for community nurseries.

Over \$88,000 of external funding was secured or utilised by Landcare groups for projects including:

- WyCare network support funding.
- reduction in Noxious Weeds (Crofton Weed) in the South Chain Valley Bay Wetland.
- Bush Regeneration in Casuarina Forest and Saltmarsh at Chittaway Point.
- Communities Caring for our Catchment program including a series of educational workshops and bush regeneration to support Landcare groups at Hargraves Beach, Canton Beach, Budgewoi and The Entrance North.

A National Green Jobs Corps team comprising of 20 young local people also volunteered on Landcare sites at Budgewoi, the Entrance North and Blue Haven and assisted with streambank rehabilitation works as part of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan.

The Community Environment Network (CEN) undertook the following projects:

- The Stepping Stones project (Wyrabalong to Wyrabalong): a partnership between Bateau Bay Bushcare, the Community Environment Network and Wyong Shire Council. It aims to link North to South Wyrabalong National Park with a green corridor by expanding and improving the quality of remnant vegetation. Project sites include Coleridge Road Reserve, EDSACC oval, Saltwater Park, Peter Clifford Reserve and the Long Jetty foreshore. The project has also held a number of community workshops including Palm off the Palm, National Tree Day, Habitat Workshops and Foreshore Water Quality Testing Training.
- During 2009-10 Waterwatch groups have been monitoring water quality in a range of areas including Spring Creek (Blue Haven), Wallarah Creek, Wyong River, Ourimbah Creek, Tuggerah Lakes, Lakes Foreshore at Long Jetty, Jilliby Creek, Little Jilliby Creek, Lake Macquarie at Mannering Park and wetlands at Pioneer Dairy Tuggerah, Blue Haven and Glenning Valley.
- CEN continued its Saltmarsh Protection and Education Project – aimed at rehabilitating priority saltmarsh sites and educating local communities about the value of

saltmarsh habitat. In consultation with Wyong Council, two priority sites have been chosen for Wyong, including Rocky Point at the mouth of Wyong River and a section of foreshore at the mouth of Saltwater Creek.

As a major employer in the region, Delta Electricity has a strong local sponsorship program supporting the social, educational, cultural, sporting and business development in local communities. Delta's investment of around \$200,000 per annum supports local government in improving local amenities, volunteer organisations (such as Progress Associations), primary and secondary school communities and charitable community service organisations. This support includes sponsorship of Landcare in the North of the Shire. In 2009-10, seven Landcare groups were sponsored by Delta for the following projects:

Landcare Projects

Group	Materials
Budgewoi Beach Dunecare	Timber and native plants
Chain Valley Bay South Bushcare	Native plants and materials
Colongra Bay Landcare	Tools and materials
Duck Haven Wetland Care	Native plants and mulch
Hargraves Beach Dunecare	Native plants
Northlakes Landcare	Native plants and planting at San Remo
WyCare	Tools and materials

Key Drivers

- continuing population growth and resultant development pressures in the catchment
- stormwater pollution and siltation reaching lakes
- community expectations

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.2.2.1	Implement works consistent with the Estuary Management Plan.	Works under the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan Implementation Program continued during 2009-10. See below for detailed information.



The Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan Implementation Program has just completed the first two years of works under the Federal Government's 'Caring for our Country' Grant. In September 2007 the first year of works commenced and were funded from the Stormwater Levy, Holiday Park Cluster Funding, Council and State Government funding. The Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan identifies a five year schedule of works to achieve improvements in four key Action Plans: Water Quality, Ecology, Socio-Economic and Knowledge and Management. These Action Plans involved works for the 2009-10 financial year as follows:

Water Quality

- Streambank rehabilitation works on two reaches along Ourimbah Creek, four reaches along Wyong River, seven reaches along Saltwater Creek and seven reaches along Tumbi Creek totalling 12.7km.
- Designs completed and approvals underway for future reaches along Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek. Construction to commence in 2010-11.
- Designs completed and approvals underway for four reaches along Spring/Wallarah Creek. Construction to commence in 2011-12.
- Construction of stormwater treatment works underway or completed at:
 - o Jetty Ave, Charmhaven
 - o Lowana Ave, Charmhaven
 - o Colongra Bay Rd, Lake Munmorah
 - o Parkside Drive, Charmhaven
 - o Lake Munmorah Reserve
 - o Loxley Close, Berkeley Vale, and
 - o Railway Road, North Wyong (Porters Creek catchment)

Ecological

- On-ground works underway or complete for four constructed saltmarshes at:
 - o Tuggerah Parade, Long Jetty,
 - o Panorama Ave, Berkeley Vale
 - o and two sites at Sunrise Ave, Halekulani (LM7 & LM8)
- Designs and approvals complete for ten additional saltmarsh construction sites at Tuggerah Lake and Lake Munmorah. Construction works will follow as a staged roll out from 2010-11.
- Passive Saltmarsh Rehabilitation & Management Plan completed, prioritising opportunities to rehabilitate degraded

saltmarsh communities around the Tuggerah Lakes estuary. Works completed in 2009-10 included:

- o soils investigations, fencing and signage at Tuggerah Bay.
- o saltmarsh mapping and demarcation from Long Jetty to Chittaway Point, close to completion.
- o eight community information sessions at key locations around the estuary.
- o saltmarsh bush regeneration at South Tacoma, Rocky Point and Oroaloo Point in partnership with the Darkingung Local Aboriginal Land Council, Hunter Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority and Community Environment Network.
- o saltmarsh bush regeneration at Geoffrey Road, Chittaway Point.
- Wetland Management Plans completed for major natural wetlands in Wyong Shire. Rehabilitation works will follow staged roll out from 2010-11.
- A Weed Management Plan developed and implemented for Porters Creek Wetland focussing on eradication of noxious and environmental weeds in key areas.

Socio-Economic

- Implementation of the Foreshore Recreation Strategy commenced and will follow a staged rollout.
- Continuation of cycleway construction at Buff Point. Link between San Remo and Budgewoi due for completion in 2009-10.
- Upgrade of boat ramp and associated facilities at Picnic Point.
- Design and approval of boat ramp upgrade at Saltwater Creek. Construction of boat ramp to commence once funding source is secured.
- Planning and design work undertaken for all access and regional recreational facilities at:
 - o Wallarah Point Park
 - o Budgewoi
 - o Lake Munmorah Reserve

Knowledge and Management

- A Monitoring and Evaluation Program for the EMP was developed. Monitoring to measure the successful implementation of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan will continue for the duration of the program.
- Development of a hydrodynamic and ecological response model for the lakes commenced to provide information on how the estuary functions, how it responds to catchment inputs and what controls should be placed on development to protect the lakes from decline. This research will continue in 2010-11.
- Completion of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan Education and Communication Strategy. A detailed program of education and communication activities commenced in 2009-10 and will continue in 2010-11.

Other Council Actions and Programs undertaken in 2009-10:

- Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategies (IWCM)

were completed for the Wyong Employment Zone and Warnervale Town Centre. Several large sub-divisions and developments have been approved with integrated watercycle management schemes.

- A longer term target identified in Council's Management Plan is to reduce pollutant loads entering the lake and implement Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD). A WSUD DCP Chapter and Technical Guidelines are in draft form and awaiting the completion of an Implementation Plan and public exhibition prior to adoption which is planned for 2011.
- Wyong beaches and estuarine sites are regularly monitored for swimming safety in accordance with the NHMRC Guidelines for Recreational Water Use (1990). Beachwatch program results are reported to Council on a monthly basis.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Lakes

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Improving	Improving	Improving	Improving

The implementation of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan has strengthened the ecological systems within the catchment. These improvements aim to keep pace with urban development pressure to maintain and potentially improve water quality within the estuary.



Creeks and Rivers

Wyong Shire has six tributaries, all of which enter the Tuggerah Lakes estuary: Wyong River, Ourimbah, Spring and Wallarah Creeks in the west, and Tumby and Saltwater Creeks in the south. Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek provide the majority of Wyong’s water supply. Provision of adequate environmental flows is necessary to maintain the ecological integrity of these streams.

At a Glance

Previous State of the Shire reports have highlighted concerns over the conditions of streams feeding into Tuggerah Lakes.

Streambank rehabilitation works undertaken over the last 15 years (and ongoing) in the water supply catchments and works undertaken as part of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan are progressively addressing streambank erosion issues.

The three estuarine river sites monitored in the Tuggerah Lakes catchment under the Beachwatch Program showed good compliance with the NHMRC (2008) swimming water quality guidelines with only 16 instances of non-compliance being recorded for the three sites.

Stream Flows and Water Extraction

2009-10 brought below average rainfall conditions for the streams with better falls of rain in October, December, February, May, and June.

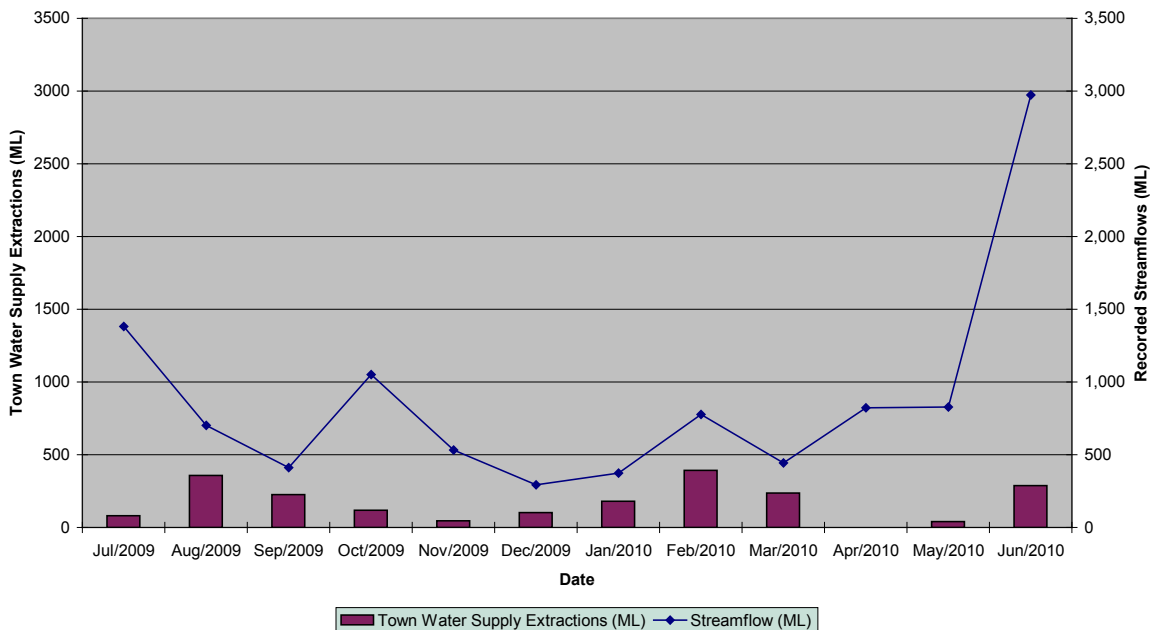
The following graphs detail the contrasting periods of wetter and dryer conditions experienced in 2009-10.

Current State

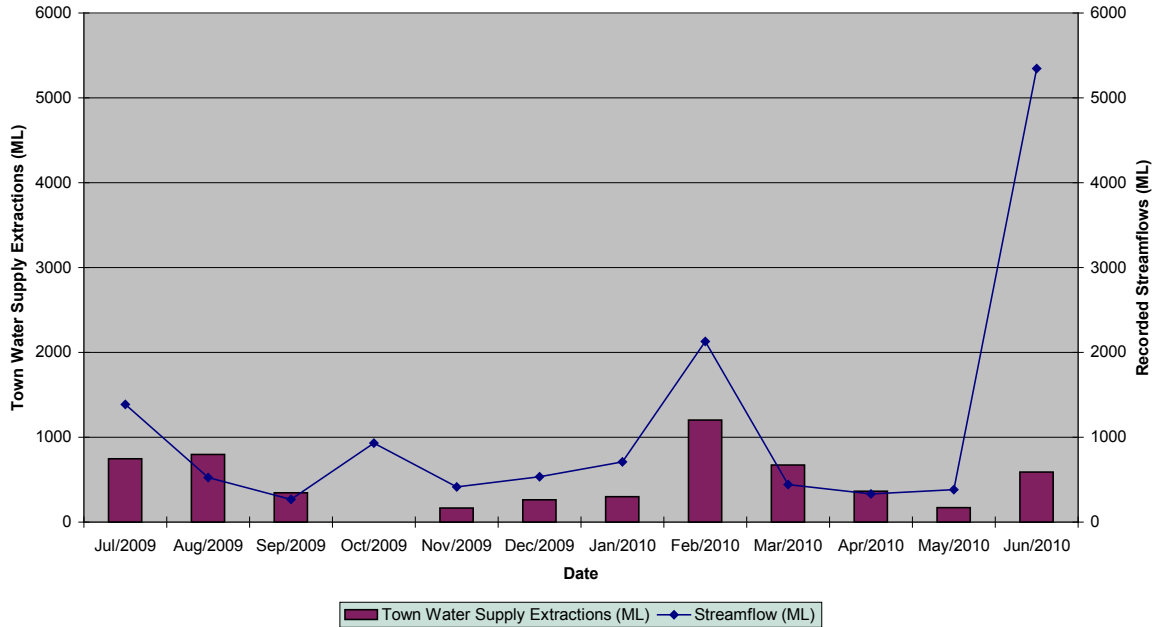
Rating	2009-2010
Wyong River	Stable
Spring - Wallarah Creek	Stable
Tumby Creek and Saltwater Creek	Improving



Streamflows & Extractions From Ourimbah Creek, July 2009 to June 2010



Streamflows & Extractions From Wyong River, July 2009 to June 2010



Key Drivers

- Stormwater runoff, erosion and sediment transfer from urban areas affecting the ecology of our creeks and rivers.
- Level of rainfall places pressure on the environmental stream flows for Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek.
- Wallarah 2 Coal Project - potential to affect the ecology of streams in the water supply catchment.

During 2009-10 Council catchment staff and landholders rehabilitated 1km of degraded streambanks in the water supply catchment area on two sites at Cedar Brush Creek, and also at Yarramalong, Wyong Creek, and Kangy Angy planting 5,319 native trees, shrubs and groundcovers at a cost of \$68,365. The work also involved the control of extensive stands of environmental weeds such as Privet, Lantana and Camphor Laurel.

The rehabilitation works at Yarramalong, Wyong Creek and Kangy Angy were carried out by Council staff under the streambank rehabilitation component of the Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan implementation. The rehabilitation work followed on from Council civil works construction crews who previously undertook civil works on the three sites at a cost of \$78,311.

Another \$18,643 was spent maintaining sites rehabilitated over the last three years bringing the total expenditure on the program for the 2009-10 year to \$165,319.

Implementation of the Streambank Rehabilitation Plans for the major tributaries in the Tuggerah Lakes catchment commenced during 2008-09 and continued into 2009-10.

The works under this program included:

- Saltwater Creek – to June 2010, 6.5km of streambank rehabilitation works were undertaken to help control erosion within this highly urbanised system and to reinstate natural riparian vegetation where possible. Works have included bank stabilisation, stormwater management, weed removal and revegetation. Ongoing maintenance of these sites will continue into 2010-11.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.2.1.1	Subject to s.94 funding and State Government approval, continue to progress the design and implementation of Porters Creek Stormwater Harvesting Scheme.	A revised Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Scheme was adopted by Council in February 2010 for the Porters Creek catchment. This plan caters for new development in the catchment and is funded through developer contributions (this may be further impacted by State Government restrictions on developer contributions). Design of the Scheme is currently underway and commencement on construction is planned for 2013 with progressive roll-out in stages over a 5-15 year period.



- Tumby Umbi Creek – to June 2010, 5.2km of rehabilitation works were completed along the banks of Tumby Umbi Creek. These works included drainage line stabilisation, bank protection, weed removal and revegetation. Ongoing maintenance of the works will continue into 2010-11.
- Wyong River – to June 2010, 0.5km of rehabilitation works were completed along the banks of Wyong River. These works included bank protection, weed removal and revegetation. Ongoing maintenance of the works will continue into 2010-11.
- Ourimbah Creek – to June 2010, 0.5km of rehabilitation works were completed along the banks of Ourimbah Creek. These works included bank protection, weed removal and revegetation. Ongoing maintenance of the works will continue into 2010-11.
- Designs have been completed and Development Approval received for four significant erosion sites on Spring/ Wallarah Creek. On-ground works will commence in 2011-12 at these sites.
- Designs have been completed and Development Approval was sought for future sites along both Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek. On-ground works will commence in 2010-11 at these sites.

Implementation of the WSUD DCP and streambank rehabilitation works in the catchment under the Estuary Management Plan and other programs in conjunction with better sediment and erosion controls will improve catchment condition and ultimately water quality and lake ecology.

Community perception of the estuary will improve and a greater understanding of the value of the estuary will be achieved through extensive education and awareness programs.

Ongoing estuary water quality monitoring programs will have provided clear trends in health for the estuary ecosystems.

Water Sharing Plans are implemented to extract for water supply needs while ensuring adequate environmental flows remain to maintain aquatic ecosystems.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Creeks & Rivers

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Improving	Improving	Improving	Improving



Wetlands

At a Glance

Current State

Rating
Wetlands

2009-2010
Declining

Council has a number of significant natural wetlands in the Shire which in combination cover an area of more than 1,600ha. The condition of these wetlands ranges from excellent (Enterprise Drive, Wyee, Gwandalan) to poor (Tumbi, Toukley) depending on the extent to which development and increased stormwater flows has affected them. Freshwater and brackish wetlands are an extremely important part of the natural landscape and provide habitat for a diverse range of flora and fauna, assist in nutrient cycling, and provide a means for sediment trapping and flood control.

Impacts on natural wetlands and sensitive aquatic environments can be mitigated through implementation of proper stormwater management practises which serve to improve water quality and reduce the volume and rate of stormwater runoff. There are 25 constructed wetlands maintained by Wyong Shire Council covering a total area of 16 Ha, these combined with rainwater tanks and stormwater harvesting intend to reduce the impacts from urban development.

Past management of stormwater has altered the wetting and drying cycles of many natural wetlands and creeks by delivering increased runoff too frequently to the floodplain. Altered hydrology (increased stormwater runoff, modified drainage, and changes to natural surface and groundwater flow) threatens the condition and long-term survival of natural wetlands and streams. The stress of altered hydrology can result in extensive tree dieback, premature tree fall, weed invasion and little or no recruitment of native wetland vegetation species. Altered fire regimes, mine subsidence, catchment modification, water pollution, weed and pest infestation, removal of vegetation and vandalism also threaten the health and longevity of Wyong Shire's wetlands.



Key Drivers

- Increasing development; which leads to changed stormwater flows, increased pollution loads, tree death and weed invasion.
- Adoption of Water Sensitive Urban Design Policy to guide new development and Council works.
- Development of Porters Creek Stormwater Harvesting Scheme in order to facilitate development within the Porters Creek catchment in a controlled and sustainable manner.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.2.1.1	Subject to s.94 funding and State Government approval, continue to progress the design and implementation of Porters Creek Stormwater Harvesting Scheme.	A revised Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Scheme was adopted by Council in February 2010 for the Porters Creek catchment. This plan caters for new development in the catchment and is funded through developer contributions (this may be further impacted by State Government restrictions on developer contributions). Detailed design of the Scheme is currently underway and commencement on construction is planned for 2013 with progressive roll-out in stages over a 5-15 year period.

An Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Strategy was formulated in 2006 to mitigate impacts on Porters Creek Wetland associated with development of the Wyong Employment Zone (WEZ) and Warnervale Town Centre (WTC). The aim of the IWCM Scheme is to capture and treat urban runoff and to divert excess stormwater around Porters Creek wetland. The IWCM strategy consists of a combination of water quality and water diversion works. Water quality requirements are mainly provided by artificial wetlands, but also by allotment and streetscape works. These are designed to reduce the sediment and nutrient load from runoff prior to it entering the Porters Creek Wetland or being pumped to Wyong River.

The water diversion works, or stormwater harvesting scheme, consist of storages, pump stations and pipelines designed to divert water around the Porters Creek Wetland to Wyong River. It is not possible to divert flows around the Porters Creek Wetland without the use of a pumped system. The discharge point into Wyong River is at the Wyong River Weir. This provides the option of discharging stormwater either upstream of the weir for use in directly supplementing the town water supply, onto the weir for use in environmental flow substitution thereby indirectly supplementing the town water supply or downstream of the weir without contacting the town water supply.

Other Council Actions and Programs undertaken in 2009-10:

- A longer term target identified in Council's Management Plan is to reduce pollutant loads entering the lake and implement Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD). A WSUD DCP Chapter and Technical Guidelines are in draft form and awaiting the completion of an Implementation Plan and public exhibition prior to adoption which is planned for 2011.
- Recommendations in the Porters Creek Wetland Management Plan include monitoring of flows in the Porters Creek catchment. Flow measurement equipment was purchased in 2010 and will be installed in early 2011. This will enable current and future flow conditions to be assessed for the catchment east of the railway; this will quantify the benefits of the IWCM Scheme and allow for optimising of the pump rates once the Scheme is operational.
- Full-scale intensive water quality monitoring of the Myrtle Brush Park Constructed Wetland is to commence in 2010-11 due to delays associated with the flow equipment. To date some physico-chemical indicators have been monitored for approximately six months. This monitoring will provide important data on how effectively constructed wetlands are removing pollutants from the stormwater and will inform future constructed wetland design.
- In March 2009 Council engaged consultants to prepare a Wetland Management Plan for freshwater wetlands identified in Development Control Chapter 30. The report provides a snapshot condition assessment of all wetlands in the Shire with key focus on important wetlands around the periphery of the lakes (including Toukley Wetland / Budgewoi Sandmass, Tumbi Wetland, Tuggerah Wetlands, Colongra Swamp and Oroaloo Point). The purpose of the study is to determine the current condition and appropriate management responses to help protect these wetlands into the future. Implementation of the Wetland Management Plan will commence in 2010-11 through the Estuary Management program using funding from Caring for our Country. On-going monitoring of key wetlands will be undertaken as a part of the EMP program.
- In addition to this, Council completed aerial and ground survey for weeds in the Porters Creek catchment to assist in the development of a Weed Management Plan for the area. Implementation of this plan commenced in 2009-10 and focussed on managing noxious and environmental weeds in key parts of the wetland and its catchment. On-going liaison with catchment landholders will assist in controlling weed sources in the future.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Wetlands

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Wetlands	Improving	Stable	Stable	Declining

Overall the Shire's wetlands are continuing to decline. However, stabilisation or a reduced rate of decline may be seen once the implementation of the Wetland Management Plan begins and the WSUD DCP chapter is adopted and implemented for new development.

In relation to Porters Creek wetland, the stormwater harvesting scheme will be progressively rolled out as new development comes on line thus mitigating the impacts of the new development. There are strategies in place to cater for existing areas of development, (Watanobbi, Wadalba, Kanwal, Lake Haven etc) however these are currently unfunded. Council must investigate grant funding and other sources of funding in order to implement IWCM in the future and further improvements in Porters Creek wetland will be achieved.



Oceans

At a Glance

Current State

Rating
Oceans

2009-2010
Stable

Wyong Shire has 37km of coastline that includes open beaches, sheltered bays and rock platforms. From the limited marine environmental data currently available to Council it appears that ocean water quality is satisfactory, although stormwater pollution continues to remain an issue of concern.

As the four significant intertidal rock platforms within the Shire are not monitored, the illegal and inappropriate collection of marine life and consequent damage to the aquatic ecosystems within the coastal zone has continued unabated.

In relation to the amenity of the coastal zone, Council continues to maintain its beaches and surf life saving clubs to a level satisfactory to residents' needs. In June 2010 the Federal Government committed \$5 million to upgrade surf clubs in Wyong Shire; new clubs will be built at Soldiers and Shelly beaches with the Entrance, Entrance North and Lakes beaches surf clubs receiving refurbishments.

Wyong Shire beaches are popular with residents and tourists alike. Of the 17 ocean beaches monitored under the Beachwatch program there was only one instance of non-compliance with NHMRC (2008) swimming water quality guidelines.

Storm events have highlighted the vulnerability of the coastal zone with properties at Cabbage Tree Harbour (Norah Head) and The Entrance North considered at risk from coastal erosion processes. These areas are of growing concern due to issues arising from climate change.

Treated sewage effluent discharges from the Norah Head and Bateau Bay (Wonga Point) outfalls continued to meet DECCW volume and quality licence requirements during 2009-10. Average daily discharges of treated sewage effluent compared to the DECCW licence, conditions during 2009-10 are provided in the table below:

Ocean Outfall discharge

Outfall	Actual average daily discharge*	DECCW/EPA licensed average daily discharge (max)
Norah Head	20,895 kilolitres	40,000 KL**
Wonga Point	5,992 kilolitres	25,000KL

* Covers effluent actually discharged to ocean but does not include treated sewage effluent diverted for non potable uses.

** Licence limit increased by DECCW in 2009-10 from 35,000 to 40,000 Kilolitres per day.

Key Drivers

- Climate change.
- Future population and development will continue to place pressure on sensitive coastal environments.
- Treated sewage discharge from ocean outfalls.
- Urban runoff from roads, sewer overflows, spills, industrial activities and building sites being the most significant source of pollution for the near-coastal marine environments.
- Runoff from urban areas - may be contaminated with sediment, nutrients, hydrocarbons, heavy metals, pathogens, and other chemicals.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.2.3.1	Construct stormwater treatment works within the ocean and Lake Macquarie catchments.	Designs for three Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) have been completed. One GPT was constructed at Gwandalan in March 2010, another is nearing construction stage. For the ocean beaches, Cabbage Tree Bay GPT and drainage has been designed but construction deferred in response to public consultation and the need to integrate with any future boat ramp. Planning for compilation of a future stormwater works program within the ocean beaches and Lake Macquarie catchments is underway.

Wyong beaches are regularly monitored for swimming safety in accordance with the NHMRC Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water (2008). Program results are reported to Council on a monthly basis.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Oceans

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Stable	Stable	Stable	Stable

Coastal and estuarine ecosystems such as wetlands, beaches, floodplains and dune systems are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Increased coastal hazards are expected from changes in coastal processes, affecting development, infrastructure and the economic base of coastal communities.

Predictions of sea level rises and increased storm activity due to global warming suggest there is a risk of continued and increased coastal recession in years to come. Climate change impacts may be exacerbated on the coastal zone if population and development pressures increase.

There is still some uncertainty of the rate at which climate change impacts will occur, particularly as they relate to the coastal zone.

A precautionary approach to developing and implementing appropriate adaptation responses will be necessary to adequately prepare for this uncertainty.

Strategic marine biodiversity monitoring in ecosystems such as rock platforms would assist in providing Council with data on how human interaction and climate change are affecting the coastal zone.

References

- http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2009/chapter6/chp_6.5.htm#6.5.32
- http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2006/chapter5/chp_5.6.htm#5.6.34



Biodiversity

At a Glance

Current State

Rating
Biodiversity

2009-2010
Declining

Wyong Shire is rich in biodiversity, enhanced by the presence of both coastal and inland vegetation communities and expresses faunal characteristics of both the Sydney Basin and north coast bioregions. It supports over 427 native fauna species (mammal, bird, amphibian, reptile and fish) and many invertebrates.

We are fortunate to retain approximately 65% of Wyong Shire's native bushland. This is partly due to a large portion of the Shire's 82,042 hectares being retained as State Forests (14,510ha - 18% of the Shire) or National Parks (13,600ha - 17% of the Shire) and partly due to large parcels of vegetated areas owned by Wyong Council and the Crown (State government).

There are 36 vulnerable species, 11 endangered and 1 critically endangered species listed nationally for Wyong Shire. In 2009-10 no additional species within the LGA have been reported as being listed.

National Listed Species (EPBC Act)

	Vulnerable	Endangered	Critically Endangered
Plants	11	3	0
Birds	10	3	0
Fish	1	1	0
Mammals	5	2	0
Frogs	4	1	0
Sharks	3	0	1
Reptiles	2	1	0
Total	36	11	1

Source: www.environment.gov.au



There are 86 vulnerable, 42 endangered and 2 critically endangered species or ecological communities listed at state level for Wyong Shire. In the 2009-10 reporting period there were a number of changes to the listings under the State Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC) for the Wyong LGA:

- In the 2008-09 reporting period Dense Cord-rush (*Baloskion longipes*) was predicted to be listed as Vulnerable and was included in the figures, although it was gazetted as Vulnerable during 2009-10, it was not listed in the Wyong sub-region.
- The Hooded Plover (*Thinornis rubricollis*) was not accounted for as an Endangered Species in the 2008-09 State of the Shire, for the 2009-10 reporting period it is listed as a Critically Endangered Species.
- The Magenta Lilly Pilly (*Syzygium paniculatum*) changed in status from Vulnerable to Endangered

Nine new additions were made under the TSC Act for the Wyong LGA:

- The Endangered Ecological Community "Themeda Grassland on seacliffs and coastal headlands in the NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin and South East Corner bioregions" was listed as Endangered.
- The Red Helmet Orchid (*Corybas dowlingii*) was listed as Endangered.
- The Spotted Harrier (*Circus assimilis*) was listed as Vulnerable.
- The Little Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta pusilla*) was listed as Vulnerable0
- The Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*) was listed as Vulnerable
- The Scarlet Robin (*Petroica boodang*) was listed as Vulnerable
- The Flame Robin (*Petroica phoenicea*) was listed as Vulnerable
- The Red-backed Button-quail (*Turnix maculosa*) was listed as Vulnerable
- The Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa*) was listed as Vulnerable

State Listed Species (TSC Act)

	EEC's	Endangered Populations	Flora	Fauna	Total
Vulnerable			16	70	86
Endangered	13	2	14	13	42
Critically Endangered			1	1	2
Total	13	2	31	84	130

Source: www.threatenspecies.environment.gov.au

Little Terns successfully breed in Wyong Shire

The Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) is listed as Endangered (Schedule 1, Part 1) in New South Wales under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act).

The Little Tern is a migratory seabird, flying from eastern Asia to Australia each year. In NSW, the Little Tern arrives from September to November to commence the breeding season. During the summer of the 2009-10 reporting period Wyong Shire was home to a large flock of both breeding and non-breeding Little Terns.

The population was discovered at Karagi Point in early December 2009 by a member of the Birding NSW – Central Coast group. As the Little Tern's nest is merely a scrape in the sand, which may be lined with shell grit, seaweed or small pebbles, it is vulnerable to being trampled. Also, as the parents often leave the nest when approached, disturbances, such as people walking past, result in the chicks or eggs being exposed. So Wyong Shire Council (WSC) and National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) officers were quickly alerted of their presence in the hopes of having the area fenced off to provide the greatest chance of nesting pairs successfully raising chicks.

WSC, NPWS, and the NSW Land and Property Management Authority worked together to gain necessary approvals, co-contribute funds and arrange for a fence and educative signage to be placed around the nesting area for the duration of the breeding season.

During this time a team of members of the birding NSW – Central Coast group, residents, and WSC staff organised a roster for twice daily bird observations, inspections of the fence, collection of rubbish from the fence, handing out Little Tern pamphlets and educating residents and holiday-makers on the importance of avoiding the fenced area. During this time NPWS officers also conducted studies on the Little Tern population.

Thankfully the combined efforts of all involved were not in vain as it is estimated that the 16 breeding pairs of Little Terns managed to rear between 18 and 21 chicks to flying stage. It is believed that in addition to the breeding pairs and chicks there were over 100 non-breeding and immature Little Terns in the area.

A number of other native bird species including Red-capped Plovers were spotted rearing young alongside the terns within the fenced area.

The last time the Little Terns bred in Wyong Shire was during the summer of 2004-05.

For more information on the Little Tern look at the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service's approved Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) Recovery Plan. <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/recoveryPlanFinalLittleTern.pdf>



Photographer Neville Lazarus



Photographer Neville Lazarus

There is continuing pressure on the Shire's biodiversity from population growth and the associated development. The area of native vegetation approved to be cleared for development is an indicator of the loss of flora and fauna habitat therefore the impact of development on biodiversity. The following table shows the approximate area of vegetation that Council approved to be cleared during the 2009-10 reporting period.

Vegetation Cleared 2009-2010

Category of proposed development	Total approved clearing (hectares)*	Total approved compensatory habitat restoration (hectares)
Residential	15.5	7.4
Commercial and Industrial	7.3	11.2
Council works	19.4	2 + Mardi to Mangrove pipeline in preparation
Total	42.2	20.6 + Mardi to Mangrove pipeline in preparation

*These figures are likely to be an underestimate of the total area approved to be cleared in the Shire as the following are not included:

- cumulative vegetation loss due to smaller developments, such as single dwellings in rural locations and tree works applications;
- single dwellings or clearing that was approved in a previous year (i.e. Section 96 applications under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979);
- clearing approved by the NSW State Government under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;
- clearing conducted by State Government agencies, such as Energy Australia and Transgrid, under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;
- clearing approved by the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority or Department of Environment and Climate Change under the Native Vegetation Act 2003;
- cumulative canopy loss due to removal of trees located within 3 metres of an Approved Structure, which Council's Development Control Plan (2005) Chapter 14 exempts from requiring consent.

Under Clause 14 of the Wyong Local Environment Plan (1991) developers granted consent to subdivide land zoned for rural, conservation, scenic protection, environmental protection or wetland management, can choose to contribute monies to Council for the purchase of land zoned for conservation for use as a public reserve or for the improvement or embellishment of any public reserve owned by the Council that is zoned for conservation. In the 2009-10 reporting period, Council acquired a 20 hectare property at Ourimbah for conservation. The property contains native vegetation in good condition, threatened fauna species habitat and an Endangered Ecological Community. The property also contributed to local wildlife corridors.

The Bush Regeneration Program will continue in 2010-2011. Wyong's 2009-10 Bush Regeneration Program included the Tumby Umpi Wetland Vegetation Rehabilitation Project and areas of regeneration under the Glenning Valley Vegetation Plan Incentives Project as listed below. The bulk of works at these sites during this reporting period focused on secondary and tertiary weeding to consolidate previous works.

Bush Regeneration

Site No.	Site location	Area (Hectares)	Area Treated
1	Southfork Reserve, Glenning Valley.	10	8.5
2	Fountaindale Ridge Reserve, Fountaindale.	65	40
3	Berkeley Vale Ridge Reserve, Berkeley Vale.	95	80
4	Palm Springs Avenue Reserve, Berkeley Vale.	5.5	3.6
5	Bangalow Close Reserve	7.5	6
6	Greenbank Avenue Reserve, Glenning Valley.	10	9
7	Pleasant Valley Reserve, Fountaindale.	35	35
8	Berrys Lane Reserve, Fountaindale.	5.6	5.6
9	Berkeley Creek Gully Reserve.	5.3	4.2
10	Berkeley Vale Wetland Reserve, Berkeley vale.	55	40
11	Tumby Umpi Wetland Vegetation Rehabilitation	24.3	12
Total Areas Treated June 2009-2010		318.2	243.9

Comparison of the area treated this year under the Bush Regeneration Program with previous years.

Previous Years Bush Regeneration

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Number of Sites	3	10	11	11
Total Site Area (Hectares)	62	298.4	322.3	318.2
Area Treated (Hectares)	15.5	151.12	243.3	243.9

All of the above sites have been identified for restoration due to their highly valued ecological assets. All of the sites are affected by the Threatened Species Conservation Act and contain a range of threatened flora, fauna or Endangered Ecological Communities.

Additionally, these figures do not account for areas revegetated as a result of tree plantings, Landcare projects and the like.

Key Drivers

- Community expectations to retain the Shire's natural beauty.
- Population growth and related needs for development, recreation, employment generating landuses (i.e. industrial and commercial), infrastructure and associated facilities.
- Tension between future development and preservation of the Shire's biodiversity.
- Changing legislation relating to listings, assessment, conservation and maintenance of areas.
- Biobanking requirements under legislation.
- Central Coast Regional Strategy – Regional Conservation Strategy and Northern Wyong Shire Structure Plan.
- The need to retain functional natural ecosystems to ensure their integrity is retained for future generations.
- Agricultural activities, primarily in the valleys – e.g. poor riparian habitat management practices.
- Poor management of feral animals (rabbits and foxes).
- Inappropriate management of domestic animals (cats and dogs).
- Diseases such as chytrid fungus and phytophthora.
- Attitudes of residents towards trees in urban areas.
- Management of public land adjoining private land e.g. foreshores and bush reserves.
- Altered fire regimes.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.3.1.1	Commence preparation of a Natural Resources Strategy	<p>The project for the development of a Natural Resources Sustainability Strategy (NRSS) has commenced. A Project Control Group (PCG) has been established and preliminary discussions and briefing sessions have taken place with staff and Councillors. The first round of community consultation is expected to take place in November 2010 with the second round scheduled to take place in early 2011 when the draft document has been completed.</p> <p>The NRSS will be an overarching strategic document that will give direction on protecting and managing natural resources on both public and private land.</p>
3.3.3.1	Commence development of a Biodiversity Management Plan that guides planning and conservation decisions.	<p>A draft Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) has been prepared for the Wyong LGA. The plan identifies 7 key actions required to improve the management of biodiversity within the Shire in a manner that considers the social and economic needs of the Wyong Shire community.</p> <p>The draft plan was presented to the Development Management Panel (DMP) on 30 April 2010, where it was agreed that amendments to the document need to be made. The finalisation of the BMP is pending staff resourcing issues.</p>

Other Council Actions and Programs undertaken in 2009-10:

- Council staff obtained a scientific licence from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water on behalf of Landcare groups working in Endangered Ecological Communities and in the habitat of threatened species. This licence applies to 25 groups working in the habitat of 4 species of flora, 5 species of fauna and 8 Endangered Ecological Communities protected by the Threatened Species Conservation Act NSW (1995).
- Council employs a Noxious Weeds & Pest Species Officer. The property inspection program continued, with high priority properties to be inspected every 5 years. All nurseries and pet/aquarium shops were inspected. Roadside inspections found an outbreak of the potentially serious invasive weed, Kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*). This weed was identified and treatment commenced. Publicity was generated from this find that has raised the level of awareness of weeds in general. The noxious weed incursion of Glush Weed, (*Hygrophila costata*) found in Fountaindale continues to be treated.
- An estimated 1,167ha of natural areas will be transferred from private to public ownership over the next seven

years. Each site will have an associated Land Management Plan with actions assigned to various sections of Council for implementation. The management of these actions will require close liaison and coordination with the various sections of Council, external government agencies, developers, contractors, community volunteers and operational staff. The initial upfront environmental restoration costs for proposed conservation lands will be supported by section 94 funding strategies. This will not include any contributions for recurrent maintenance costs. There is a need to nurture the sites in perpetuity by setting up maintenance programs once the S.94 contributions are expended.

- During the 2009-10 reporting period, Council received \$115,000 in grant funds through the Local Government Fire Mitigation Program to assist in the maintenance of 47km of Asset Protection Zone. Council also received a further \$35,750 through the Fire Mitigation Works Fund to upgrade three Asset protection zones with a total length of 1.6km.
- Significant conservation on private lands has been achieved through the CEN's Land for Wildlife (for rural properties) and Habitat for Wildlife (for urban properties) Programs. Wyong and Gosford Councils are jointly sponsoring the Land for Wildlife program on the Central Coast, which is part of a national program to support private landholders who wish to manage part of their land for native biodiversity.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Biodiversity

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Declining	Declining	Declining	Declining

The decline in the Shire's biodiversity is being driven by a number of different factors. As the Shire's population increases, the resulting development continues to fragment the remaining native vegetation, leading to a loss in viable habitat for many native species. Whilst the majority of this development is focused east of the freeway, fragmentation is also evident in the valleys as a result of agricultural practices, e.g. poor riparian habitat management. This fragmentation is exacerbated by the loss and degradation of and competition for habitat caused by exotic plant species, both those commonly thought of as weeds (e.g. lantana and bitou bush) as well as escaped garden plants (including non-endemic natives).

Competition for resources with introduced species (e.g. rabbits and deer) as well as predation by introduced animals (e.g. feral cats and foxes as well as domestic cats and dogs), altered fire regimes and diseases such as chytrid fungus (in frogs) and root-rot fungus (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) are also among the factors contributing to the decline of biodiversity in the Wyong Shire LGA.

Whilst there are programs already being conducted that are aiding in biodiversity management such as those detailed above as well as works under the Estuary Management Plan (e.g. streambank rehabilitation that will regenerate some of the riparian habitat in the valleys), there needs to be a more overarching strategic approach to the management of biodiversity across the whole of the Shire.

The Central Coast Regional Strategy (CCRS) does not detail the way in which the potentially conflicting land uses of development and biodiversity will be managed. This has the potential to significantly affect the Shire's capacity to fulfil its regional and state objectives for population and employment targets over the next 20 years. As such, overarching strategies need to be developed to guide the management of the complex biodiversity issues within the Shire. The development of a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) and its associated key actions will be the first step to allow biodiversity issues to be effectively identified, strategically managed and monitored to provide long-term stability. The overarching Natural Resources Sustainability (NRSS) should also aid in the long-term management of our natural resources. If development pressures continue to fragment the remaining bushland in Wyong Shire without the direction of strong conservation planning, then biodiversity values will continue to decline to the detriment of our overall sustainability.

Climate change is having an increasing role to play in land use decisions at the local level with many existing threatening processes such as weeds, pests and fragmentation likely to be exacerbated by climate shifts. The precautionary principle would encourage us to avoid making decisions and actions where we really don't know the possible outcomes and impacts.

There are management and planning actions that can be undertaken to assist species and ecosystems to respond and build resilience to climate change. These actions may assist the natural adaptation of species and protect species that are particularly vulnerable to climate change. Therefore, maintaining connectivity across the landscape will be a key element of mitigation planning at the regional and state level.

As many programs and initiatives being undertaken across the Shire are reliant on external funding (i.e. Federal or State), should this funding no longer be available, the trend for the next 20 years would be fairly grim. There are many initiatives and programs which could be undertaken and could result in improved outcomes for biodiversity (through both protection and education), but are subject to current resourcing constraints. The challenge will continue to be to maintain the "bushland" lifestyle valued by the residents of our Shire by integrating the social and economic aspects of development with preserving and enhancing the natural environment.

It is likely that ecological stress and decline will continue to occur in small fragmented reserves at the urban bushland interface. Community expectations to invest greater effort in actively managing our natural areas are predicted to increase with significant local, national and international focus on climate change. Expectations are also likely to be heightened following delivery of various proposed environmental education programs (e.g. Tuggerah Lakes Estuary Management Plan education strategy).

A coordinated and holistic approach to biodiversity management across the Shire would have the potential to reduce the decline in the Shire's biodiversity and result in long term stability and resilience.

References

<http://www.environment.gov.au>

Air Quality

At a Glance

Current State

Rating

Air Quality

2009-2010

Declining

Air quality across Wyong Shire is generally good. However, there are some concerns that with population growth and our lifestyle patterns it may be declining and therefore should be monitored more closely.

A state wide air quality monitoring program is run by Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) with monitoring sites located across Sydney, the Illawarra, Lower Hunter and some rural sites; the closest sites to Wyong Shire under this program are located in Newcastle CBD and Wallsend. Although they are relatively close in proximity the data recorded by these stations may not be relevant to Wyong Shire as there are a number of different factors within Newcastle and Wyong Shire that may impact on local air quality, an example of this being the power stations in Wyong Shire that are not present in Newcastle.

As such, Council has in the past relied on the Central Coast Public Health Unit (CCPHU) and private industries for air quality data relevant to the Shire. From 2001-02 until 2007-08 the CCPHU provided PM10 (see table following for detail) data recorded by their background monitoring station located in Wyong. However, the monitoring equipment experienced irreparable mechanical failure during late 2008 and replacement of the equipment is unlikely due to cost.

Common Air Pollutant	Acronym
Total suspended particulates	TSP
Particulate matter <10 µm	PM10
Particulate matter <2.5 µm	PM2.5
Nitrogen dioxide	NO2
Sulfur dioxide	SO2
Ozone	O3
Total suspended particulates	TSP

At present the only known air quality monitoring taking place within the Shire is being conducted by Delta Electricity and the Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture (WACJV).

Delta Electricity maintains two coal-fired power stations in Wyong Shire - Vales Point (full-time operation) and Munmorah (standby) as well as the newly commissioned Colongra gas-fired power station. As part of their licensing agreement with DECCW Delta Electricity records ambient air quality data. All three power stations operate in an area surrounded by small communities and therefore Delta aims to minimise the impact of its operations on neighbouring communities and the local environment.

Council received ambient air quality data including PM2.5 readings, NO2, SO2, and Total Suspended Particles (TSP)

from Delta Electricity's monitoring stations at Wyee and Lake Munmorah from 1993 until the 2007-08 reporting period; since this date Delta has had staff and policy changes and no longer supply Council with the air quality data they have recorded.

The Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture (WACJV) is recording ambient air quality data as a baseline prior to the proposed long-wall coal mining under the valleys (see Highlands and Valleys for more information on this project).

The WACJV has provided Council with the air quality data recorded since 1999 by their High Volume Air Samplers located at Buttonderry Road and Tooheys Road. The TSP and PM10 data from the WACJV has been graphed with previous data received from CCPHU and Delta Electricity.

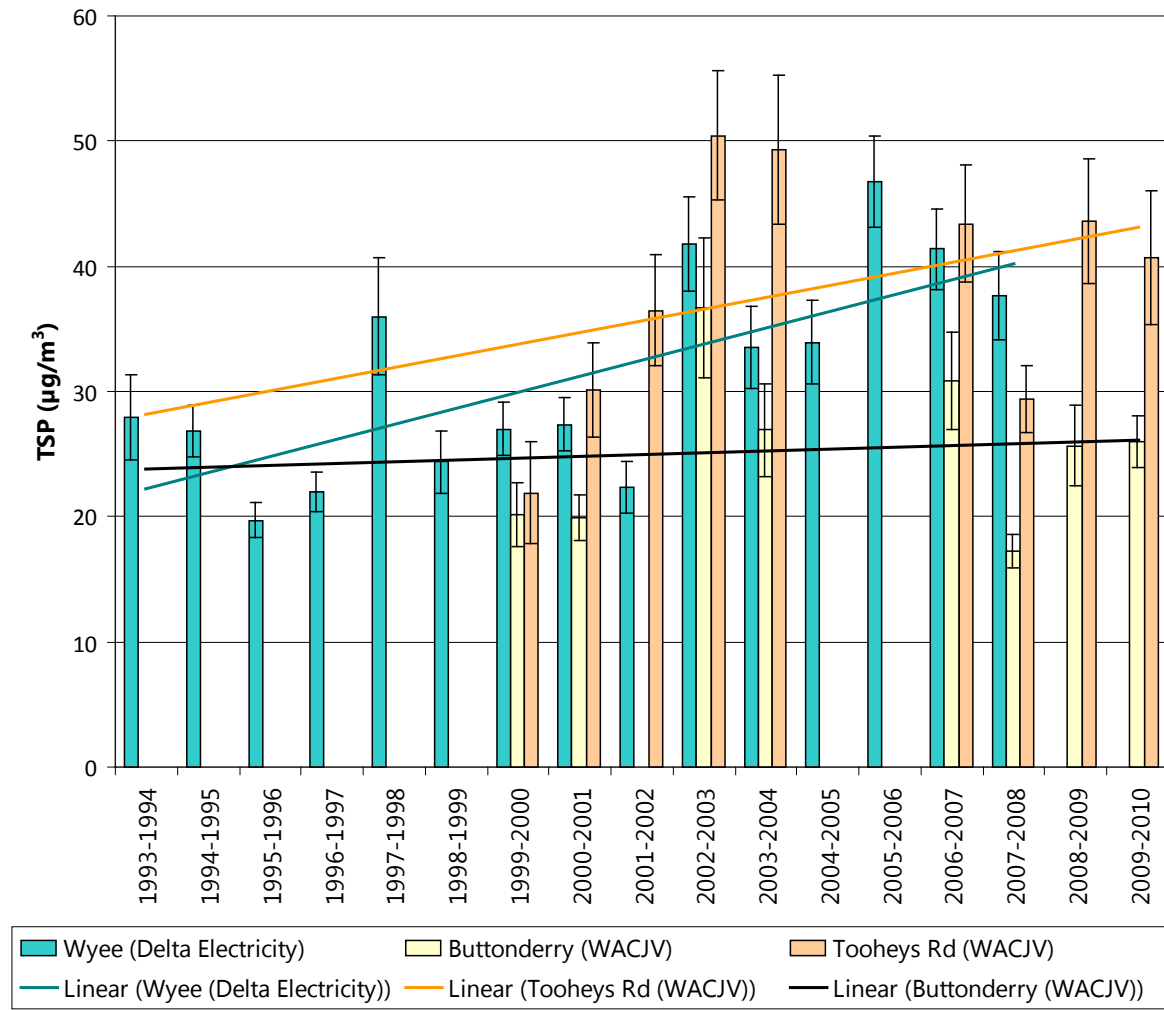
This data gives an indication of the volume of fine and coarse particles in the air resulting from local traffic, wind-driven pollution from surrounding urban and industrial areas (e.g. Newcastle and the power stations) and events such as bushfires.

The difficulty in obtaining air quality data relevant for Wyong Shire LGA highlights the dilemma for Council in that it does not have access to data from independent reliable monitoring stations such as that provided (by DECCW) to Newcastle and Sydney Metropolitan areas.

The data received to June 2010 shows an increasing trend in Total Suspended Particulates and PM10 as shown in the following graphs.



**Average Yearly Total Suspended Particulates ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)
(recorded every 6th day)**



The above graph shows the Yearly Average Total Suspended Particulate (TSP) recorded between 1993 and 2010 at Wyee (Delta Electricity), Buttonderry Rd and Tooheys Road (Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture).

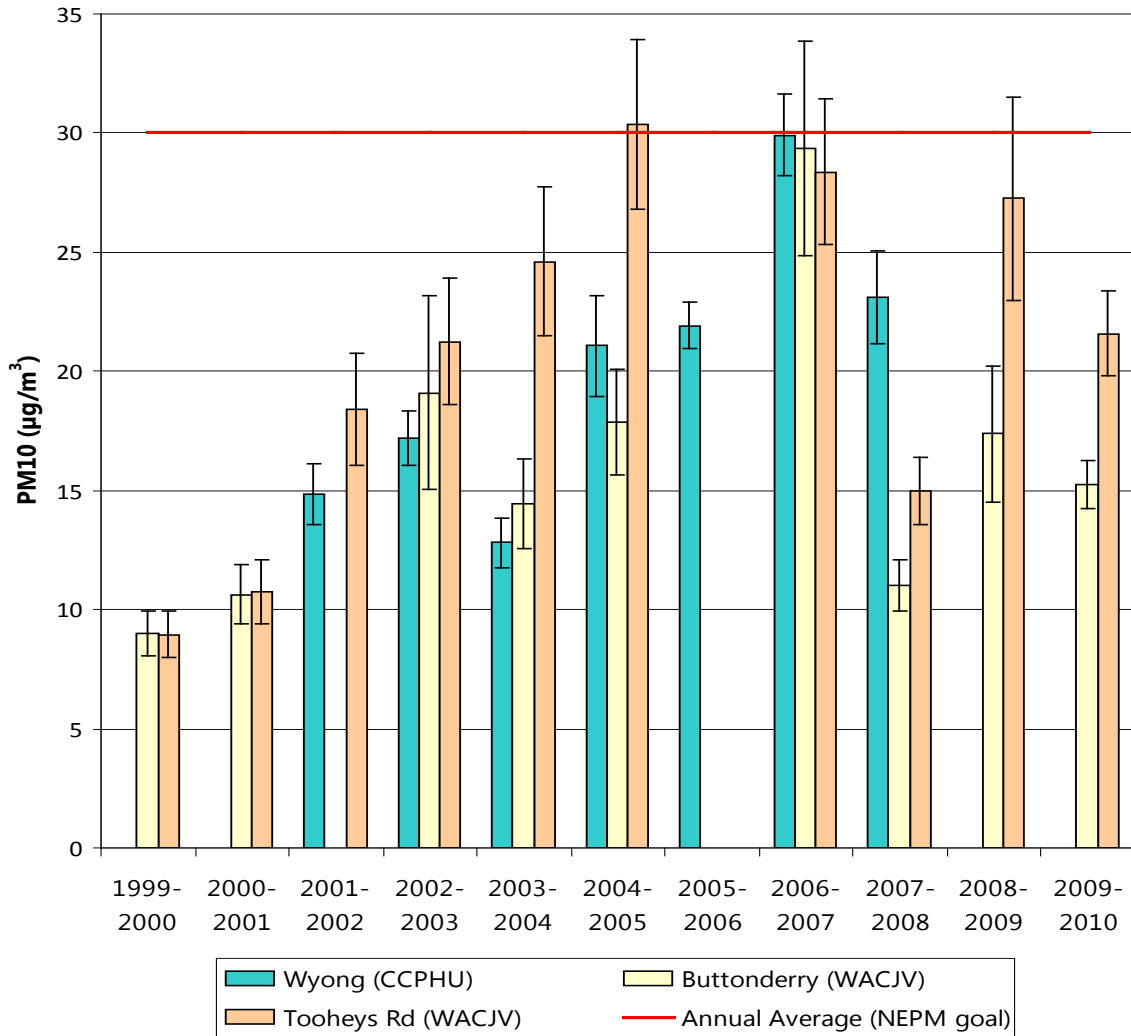
The bars shown on each column represent the standard error of the mean (average) for that year and site; the standard error gives a measure of how well the average represents the data. Therefore, the smaller the bars are the more accurately the average represents all of the individual recordings.

Although there are differences between the annual averages at the three sites, the graph shows an increasing trend for the concentration of airborne suspended particles at all three sites.

ERM the company conducting the air quality monitoring for the WACJV report that "monitoring of TSP at both sites during 2009-10 showed that concentrations were generally below the annual average goal of $90\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ set by DECCW. On one occasion at the Buttonderry site on 15 September 2009, and on two occasions at the Tooheys Road site on 15 September 2009 and 20 September 2009, concentrations were observed to be above the annual average goal. TSP concentrations were observed to be highest during Spring and Summer months and the lowest concentrations were observed during the Autumn and Winter months."

The exceedences in September 2009 relate to the dust storm that affected the east coast of Australia in late September 2009.

**Yearly average PM₁₀ data 2001-2010
(recorded every 6th day)**



The above graph shows the Yearly Average PM₁₀ recorded between 1999 and 2010 at Wyong (Central Coast Public Health Unit), Buttonderry Road and Tooheys Road (Wyong Areas Coal Joint Venture).

The bars shown on each column represent the standard error of the mean (average) for that year and site; the standard error gives a measure of how well the average represents the data. Therefore, the smaller the bars are the more accurately the average represents all of the individual recordings.

The graph shows an increasing trend in the level of PM₁₀ recorded across the Shire. The National Environment Protection Council's Ambient Air Quality NEPM (National Environment Protection Measures) set an annual average goal of 30µg/m³ for PM₁₀. The graph shows for Wyong LGA this goal has been achieved for all years and sites with the exception of Tooheys Road in 2004-05.

ERM the company conducting the air quality monitoring for the WACJV report that during 2009-10 "PM₁₀ concentrations observed at the Buttonderry site were all below the DECCW 24-hour maximum guideline of 50µg/m³. PM₁₀ concentrations observed at the Tooheys Road site were generally below the [NEPM] 24-hour maximum guideline with exceedances noted on three occasions on 15 September 2009, 20 March 2010 and 07 May 2010. Concentrations appear to be highest during Spring and Summer months while the lowest concentrations generally occurred during Autumn and Winter months. PM₁₀ concentrations observed at both locations were generally below the annual average guideline of 30µg/m³ set by [NEPM]"

Whilst the trends indicate an increase in airborne particles, there is a decreasing trend for air pollution incidents reported to DECCW.

The following air pollution incidents were reported to DECCW over the past four reporting periods:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Air Pollution Incidents where the EPA was the Appropriate Regulatory Authority (ARA)	60	62	45	15
Air Quality complaints received by DECCW that were referred back to Council.	27	19	9	7

Key Drivers

- Transport is a significant source of particulate matter, as well as oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic compounds. The Shire's growth and residents' increasing dependency on motor vehicles will result in increasing emissions.
- Continued demand for electricity generation by power stations fuelled by burning of coal will impact on air quality and greenhouse emissions.

Response

DECCW and Council respond to air quality complaints as they occur and Council continues to implement its Cycleway Plan to provide alternatives to private vehicle travel.

Colongra gas power facility – Delta Electricity

The new gas fired power station built on the grounds of the Munmorah Power Station was opened on 21 December 2009.

Known as Colongra Gas Turbines, this plant will help secure future power supply across New South Wales and lower greenhouse gas emissions. With a capacity of 667 megawatts, it will generate enough power for 700,000 homes every hour it operates while producing about 40% less greenhouse gas emissions compared to coal-fired power plants. Colongra is designed to meet demand when it peaks during very hot or cold periods. Gas-fired power stations can fire up quickly at times of peak demand compared to coal-fired power stations.

During the construction phase, over 1,000 people worked on the Colongra site in total, with a peak of 350 people on-site during the busiest periods of development.

Presently we have inadequate and inconsistent air quality monitoring for comparative purposes, however, from the available data the trend is showing increased particulate matter over time. This has implications for future air quality, particularly given the northern part of the Shire will be a focus for further industrial and urban development in the future and hence any increase in particulate matter may exacerbate the air quality issue.

An increase in the risk of more bushfires due to climate change could also eventually impact on air quality.

In light of development and population pressures across the Shire, improving air quality monitoring may provide a clearer understanding of the Shire's air quality for the future.

References

- <http://www.de.com.au/ArticleDocuments/42/Colongra%20booklet%20-%20DE431.pdf.aspx>
- <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/air/actionforair/>
- <http://www.ephc.gov.au/taxonomy/term/23>



Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Air Quality

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Declining	Declining	Declining	Declining

Climate Change

There is a volume of scientific evidence that indicates we are experiencing rapid climate change and that temperatures are increasing. In Australia temperatures have, on average, risen by about 1°C with an increase in the annual number of days of extreme high temperatures. Similarly there is an increase in the frequency of heatwaves and a decrease in the numbers of frosts and cold days (Bureau of Meteorology 2010). CSIRO projections indicate that by 2070 average summer temperatures will be 3°C warmer (DECCW 2010). Along the coast, sea-levels are rising resulting in coastal erosion and recession. The potential for increases in frequency and severity of flood-producing storm events will exacerbate the risks to coastal properties as well as inundate low-lying areas (DECCW).

For Sydney and Central Coast regions summer rainfall is expected to increase by 20-50% with a smaller increase in spring. Winter rainfall is expected to decrease. El Nino years are likely to continue to be drier than average and become hotter. La Nina years are likely to continue to be wetter than average and also become hotter (DECCW).

At A Glance

Current State

Rating

Climate Change

2009-2010
Declining

The projected impacts of climate change will cut across all areas of local government responsibility. For Wyong Shire, climate change impacts will have significant short, medium and long term social, environmental and economic consequences. With its significant natural and built assets, its diversity of land uses, and low lying coastal topography, Wyong Shire is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Some of these vulnerabilities include:

- Increased temperature – bushfires, building operation costs, human health, asset deterioration;
- Changes in rainfall – reduced drinking water supply, flooding, open space management;
- Sea level rise – flooding and inundation, coastal recession and erosion, asset damage, loss of coastal and estuarine ecosystems; and
- Extreme wind and storm events – emergency services, adequacy of building standards, stormwater flooding, damage to infrastructure and natural assets.

Key Drivers

- The largest single driver of climate change is population growth.
- The largest single section of the economy producing greenhouse gases is energy generation (see Energy section).
- Transport emissions, a major cause of global warming and climate change, are increasing and set to continue well into the future with cars, aviation and container travel set to double in the next 20 years.
- Levels of greenhouse gases are increasing at double the speed they were in the 1980s (CSIRO 2006).

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.4.1.1	Establish a methodology to measure and report on Council's carbon footprint.	Initial investigations commenced into confirming appropriate methodologies for Council's sources of greenhouse emissions.
3.4.1.2	Implement Year 3 of Council's Energy Savings Action Plan.	A range of actions under the Energy Savings Action Plan (ESAP) were effectively completed or commenced during the year. Some of these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • replacement of an old, inefficient air conditioner; and • take-up of Government Rebates to install PV panels on a range of community buildings. Additional staff were seconded to the Sustainability Unit in January 2010 to work on current and emerging issues.
3.4.2.1	Undertake Stage I of the Climate Change Risk Assessment.	Council undertook a Climate Change risk assessment process resulting in development of a draft Adaptation Report. Hunter Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy (HCCREMS) also assisted in this process from a regional perspective.
3.4.2.2.	Prepare a policy that addresses the impacts of climate change across Council units (such as sea level rise, bushfire risk, human health risks etc.).	Draft policy was presented to Council in December 2009. Council's decision was rescinded at the January 2010 meeting with new resolutions to amend the Policy. Promulgation of the Policy will move into 2010-11.

Responding to many of the anticipated impacts of climate change will fall under the responsibility of local government. Typical functions of Council to be affected by these impacts include:

- Infrastructure and property services.
- Provision of recreation facilities.
- Health services.
- Planning and development approvals.
- Natural resource management.
- Water and sewerage services.

To reduce some of the anticipated negative social, environmental and economic impacts of climate change Wyong Council has committed to responding to the impacts of climate change through development of a policy framework to guide development and strategic planning decisions and to develop and implement Adaptation and Mitigation Action Plans.

A Draft Climate Change policy was completed and a Report presented to Council in December 2009 with public exhibition until February 2010. Council's decision was rescinded at the January 2010 meeting with new resolutions to amend the Policy. A revised Policy will be re-submitted to Council for further exhibition following consideration of resolutions and inclusion of new State Government policy initiatives.

To complement the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change and Water (DECCW) Sea Level Rise Policy Statement released in October 2009, the NSW Department of Planning released a draft Sea Level Rise Planning Guideline to provide guidance to local government in implementing the DECCW Policy Statement. The statutory guidance provided by State Government gives Council some direction for planning decisions at both a strategic and development assessment level.

Staff are also progressing the resolutions from Council including an economic analysis to be undertaken by Consultants. Promulgation of the Policy will now move into 2010-11. Other policies and plans Wyong Council has in place to consider Climate Change include:

- Corporate Management Plan (Annual Plan in 2010-11).
- Estuary Management Plan.
- WaterPlan 2050.
- Coastline Hazard Definition Studies (as a prelude to a Coastline Management Plan).
- a Climate Change Action Plan.
- Tuggerah Lakes Risk Management Plan

In early 2010 Council undertook the first phase of a climate change risk assessment with view to developing an Adaptation Plan. With assistance from Echelon, the risk management arm of Council's Insurer Statewide, staff identified and ranked the most significant risks to Council's services, functions (as described above) and assets. The Plan (to be completed in 2010-11) will provide adaptation measures for consideration in Council's Annual Plan and Operational Plans.

The information gained from this risk assessment process feeds into the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy's (HCCREMS) regional climate change project which looked for synergies and economies of scale for actions to address risks common to all of the coastal Councils in the Hunter region.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Climate Change

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Climate Change	Declining	Declining	Declining	Declining

A paper presented by DECCW (at a workshop organised by the LGSA) suggested that Council's planning should be based on the following predicted changes by 2100:

- sea levels will rise by about 0.91m.
- the frequency of storm waves greater than 3m may increase by up to 41%.
- the change in maximum storm wave height may increase by up to 32%.
- rainfall intensity may increase by up to 15%, thereby reducing a current 1 in 100 year design event to a 1 in 40 year event.
- evaporation rates may increase by up to 38%.

It is expected that our local climate will also become warmer, drier generally, subject to more severe weather events – rainfall intensity, wind velocity, heat waves, subject to greater storm surges, subject to less runoff from rivers, more frequent and more severe droughts, increased flash flooding. It should be noted that these changes will occur progressively so the perceived impact over the next 20 years is likely to be small compared to the 2100 predictions.

Climate change will progressively and significantly have an impact on Council and the community. It will alter design parameters, render existing designs obsolete and change the areas affected by hazards in the future.

One of the most challenging aspects of preparing for the unavoidable impacts of climate change will be connected with rising sea levels, resulting in some likely impacts including the following:

- loss of sandy beaches.
- increased flood levels in tidal reaches.
- changes in estuarine tidal regimes.

- reduction in clearance under bridges.
- major pressure for beach protection particularly adjacent to development.
- need for bunding of low lying areas.
- need for modification and/or relocation of sewage infrastructure in low lying areas.
- wharves and jetties may become inoperable unless raised.
- increased flooding of low lying areas.
- saturated road pavements.
- increased erosion.
- rising water tables and groundwater salt levels.
- flooding of lakeside facilities, such as toilets, cycleways and playgrounds.

It is quite clear that strong global mitigation measures are necessary if the more severe consequences of climate change are to be avoided. In terms of Australia's contribution, this will hopefully be achieved with an emissions trading scheme outlined by the Federal Government for 2012.

For Council, a continued commitment to programs aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions through mechanisms such as regulation, education, revegetation programs, renewable technologies and energy efficiencies will provide a solid basis for future initiatives as part of Greenhouse Gas Reduction.

Similarly, monitoring of new information is essential to be able to provide guidance and as much certainty as can be expected in a very uncertain environment.

References

- NSW Bureau of Meteorology August 2010 <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/change/>
- DECCW 2010 Summary of Climate Change Impacts Central Coast Region.



Energy

At a Glance

Current State

Rating
Energy

2009-2010
Declining

The above rating of declining is based on a predicted increase in energy consumption leading to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy significantly contributes to all sectors of the economy, including supplying power to households and industry. Between 2001 and 2006 total energy usage in NSW and ACT increased by 3%. In 2006, the electrical and transport industries were responsible for 58% of the total energy consumed in NSW and the ACT. Residential energy use accounted for 8% of total direct energy consumed. In the same period, residential consumption decreased slightly by 1% (ABS 2008).

Increasing population, high economic growth and high wages have led to behavioural and lifestyle changes which increase consumer demand and consumption habits. Electricity is the most common energy source used by NSW households to power home heating and cooling systems with an estimated 1,321,600 or 50% of NSW households using either ducted, split system or portable air-conditioning to cool their homes (ABS 2008).

The majority of electricity is generated by the burning of fossil fuels in coal fired power stations, which contributes 36% of the country's net carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions (AUA 2008). Hence, the amount and type of energy used by industry and to an extent households has considerable implications for the environment, including:

- Depletion of natural resources by:
 - o use of large quantities of water, and
 - o clearing of vegetation through our insatiable demand for more power and therefore construction of new power stations (e.g. clearing for Colongra gas pipeline).
- Greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution (see Air Quality and Climate Change) (ABS 2008)

Black coal provided 89% of the total NSW electricity generation in 2006–2007, compared with 7% provided by renewable energy sources such as hydro, wind, solar, biomass or biogas (ABS 2008).

Wyong Shire Energy Consumption

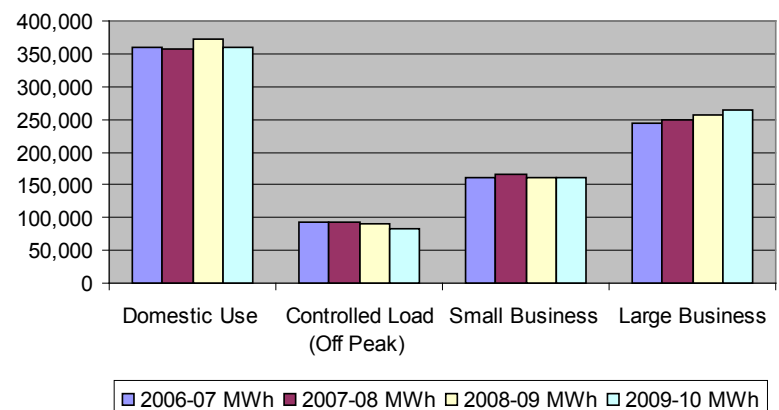
Energy Australia provides energy consumption data for the Wyong Shire. The details are compiled from customer billing data, aggregated by suburb. Suburbs are then allocated in their entirety to the Local Government Area where the majority of the suburb is located.

The information is split into four categories:

- Domestic Use refers to all electricity usage in residential properties except controlled load.
- Controlled Load (Off Peak) refers to residential usage on controlled load. Primarily storage of hot water.
- Small Business refers to business customers with usage typically less than 750 MWh per year.
- Large Business refers to business customers with usage typically greater than 750 MWh per year.
- Small and Large Business categories includes all non-residential uses (for example Government).

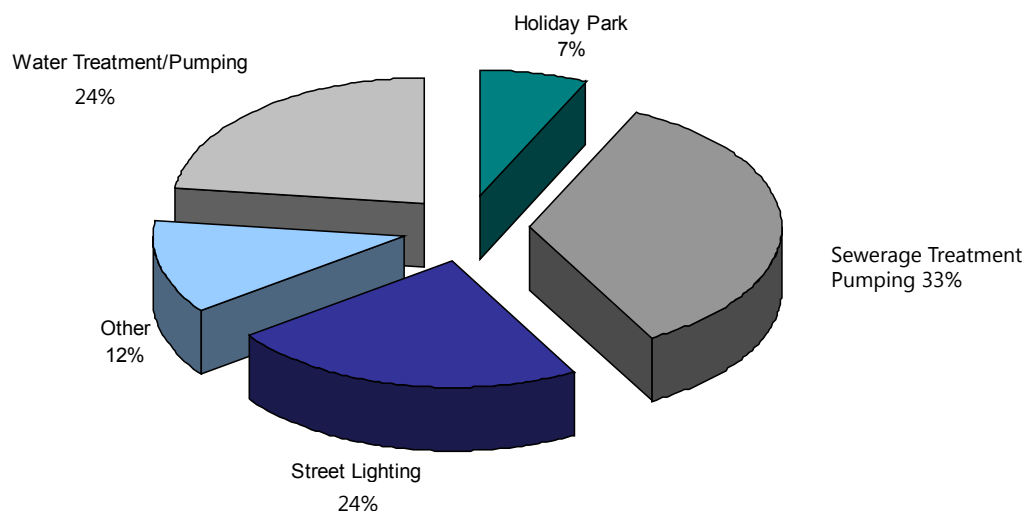
Year to year changes are strongly influenced by weather. The following table displays energy consumption levels from 2006-07 through to 2009-10.

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	% Change
	MWh	MWh	MWh	MWh	08-09 to 09-10
Residential Electricity Use					
Domestic Use	358,723	357,674	371,780	359,265	-3.40%
Controlled Load (Off Peak)	93,609	92,573	91,321	84,229	-7.80%
Residential Total	452,332	450,247	463,101	443,494	-4.20%
Business Electricity Use					
Small Business	159,991	165,576	162,176	161,046	-0.70%
Large Business	243,296	249,726	256,890	264,615	3.00%
Business Total	403,288	415,301	419,065	425,662	1.60%
Total Electricity Use	855,620	865,549	882,166	869,156	-1.50%



Council's own Electricity Consumption

The following chart shows the large site consumption by facility type:



In 2009-10 Council's total electricity consumption was 34,259 MWh. Of this amount approximately 6,120 MWh was consumed at 395 "small sites" and 28,139 MWh was consumed at 25 "large sites" (sites that consume more than 160 MWh per annum). Consequently, the large sites accounted for 82% of total energy consumption.

The cost of electricity at the large sites in 2009-10 was \$3.7m. In addition, there were service and maintenance charges for street lighting that cost \$1.1m. Expenditure on the small sites was \$0.7m to give a total of \$5.5m.

The forecast for 2010-11, assuming that the same level of energy consumption occurs, is that the large sites will cost about the same, street lighting service charges will increase by about \$0.7m and small site charges will increase by about 15% to give a forecast total cost of \$6.3m. The charges for large sites have been contained by participating in a Department of Commerce Contract C777 until 30 June 2011. For small sites the increases have been approved by IPART and for street lighting services the

substantial increase of about \$0.7m arises from a determination by the Australian Energy Regulator. Council's strategy to minimise these costs is to minimise energy consumption and obtain the best rates from the electricity supplier.

Council's Consumption Trends

The following table shows the consumption at large sites since the benchmark year of 2004-05:



Council's Consumption Trends

The following table shows the consumption at large sites since the benchmark year of 2004-05:

Year	Energy Used (kWh) Large Sites	Change from 2004-05	Energy Used (kWh) Top ten sites	Change from 2004-05
2004-05	25,697,082	0.0%	20,432,831	0.0%
2005-06	25,123,934	(2.2%)	19,539,816	(4.4%)
2006-07	24,509,004	(4.6%)	18,971,578	(7.2%)
2007-08	30,135,423	17.3%	22,330,190	9.3%
2008-09	29,431,097	14.5%	23,443,613	14.7%
2009-10	27,702,625	7.8%	21,322,364	4.4%

Compared to the baseline of 2004-05, there was a reduction of energy consumption in 2005-06 and 2006-07, followed by a large increase over the next two years (to 2008-09). In the 2009-10 reporting period there was a decline in energy consumption. The primary reason for this is that the electricity consumption is significantly affected by the quantity of water that is treated and pumped. In 2008-09 this amounted to 7.25 MWh but in 2009-10 it was only 5.1 MWh specifically due to reduced use of the Wyong River off take station as Mardi Dam was being modified as part of the Mardi to Mangrove link project.



Council's Greenhouse Impact

Group	Large Sites MWh	Small Sites MWh	Total MWh	Green%	Black MWh	G H G tonnes
Water & Sewerage	15,891	2,747	18,638	10%	16,774	14,929
Other	9,777	2,534	12,311	25%	9,233	8,218
Wyong Civic Centre	2,035	-	2,035	32%	1,384	1,232
Total	27,703	5,281	32,984		27,391	24,378

The net impact from electricity consumption in 2009-10 was the emission of about 25,368 tonnes of greenhouse gases (carbon-dioxide equivalent). This was obtained with the use of 10% green energy at Water & Sewerage sites, 32% green at Wyong Civic Centre and 25% green at the remainder of Council sites. The figure for Wyong Civic Centre is based on 25% for July 2009 – March 2010 and 50% from April 2010.

Key Drivers

- Increasing population.
- Higher per capita consumption.
- Growing cost of energy in NSW.
- High car ownership.
- Large commuter population.
- Increasing community awareness of the climate change issue.
- Council's commitment to implementing energy and greenhouse reduction strategies.
- New legislation and regulations on Council and the community in relation to energy saving and greenhouse reductions e.g., Proposed amendment to the Energy Administration Amendment (Water and Energy Savings) Act 2005 will make it mandatory for Council to undertake committed Actions in its Energy Savings Action Plan.
- Impact of additional energy consumption due to commissioning of the Mardi Suite of Works and the Mardi-Mangrove Link project.
- Water consumption and reuse.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
3.4.1.2	Implement Year 3 of Council's Energy Savings Action Plan.	A range of actions under the Energy Savings Action Plan (ESAP) were effectively completed or commenced and a number of new energy savings are being initiated through the ESAP team. One additional staff member was seconded from Shire Services to Shire Planning in January 2010 to give more focus to working on current and emerging issues.

The NSW Government requires Local Government Areas with a population over 50,000 people to develop Energy Savings Action Plans (ESAP). Management and operational actions were identified in Council's Energy Savings Action Plan adopted in August 2008.

Through the Energy Saving Action Plan a number of projects were investigated, some of which were found to be not viable. A number of energy saving initiatives have been identified at Council's Holiday Parks through the development of an environmental management plan. Some of these initiatives include solar panels for electricity and water heating, and the use of energy efficient appliances. The Energy Saving Committee is looking to review energy saving issues including educating staff on energy efficiency at work. Other initiatives include:

- improving energy efficiency at Wyong South Sewage Treatment Plant by installing variable speed pumps (hydrovar) in the reuse water system.
- the replacement of inefficient air conditioning equipment at Wyong Civic Centre using funding from the Waste & Sustainability Improvement Program.
- investigation of a more efficient means of providing aeration at Wyong South Sewage Treatment Plant (which could potentially reduce the consumption at the plant by 30%).
- investigation of Council's role in encouraging the community to reduce energy consumption.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Energy

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Declining	Declining	Declining	Declining

The above rating of declining is based on a predicted increase in energy consumption leading to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

Even at the current level of demand, there will be considerable challenges to meet the estimated increase in future energy cost given the imminent introduction (in 2012) of an emissions trading scheme aimed at reducing carbon emissions. In addition, total energy demand across Australia is projected to increase by 50% by 2020 and it is anticipated that to meet the nation's energy demands will require at least \$37 billion in energy investment (Energy Matters 2008). This makes the actual cost of electricity consumption and the cost of infrastructure development unsustainable in financial and environmental terms.

Attracting new investment to replace old generating plant and meet demand will be difficult as electricity prices in Australia are almost the lowest in the world (e.g. 30-36% of Japan's). Industry sources have suggested that a 4c/kWh wholesale price would be required to justify such an investment.

Residential energy consumption is projected to increase over the period 1990 to 2020 by 56% continuing the trend of increasing the proportion being met by electricity which currently has high greenhouse gas intensity. In spite of this overall increase, (for air-conditioners, more power-intensive televisions and an increase in standby energy consumption, lighting, computers and other home entertainment), a 6% decline in per household energy is expected compared to 1990 levels. This decline in consumption is being driven by existing and planned energy efficiency programs and building design. In contrast to declining household demand, the trend in per person residential energy consumption for 1990 to 2020 is projected to increase by approximately 20%. This is due to a decline in the number of persons per household (DEWHA 2008).

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Wyong Shire Council



Governance

2009-10

Governance

Employment and Incomes

Employment and incomes are fundamental contributors to quality of life. In particular, local income-generating opportunities provide residents with the time and money necessary to actively participate in their community. At the same time, financial disadvantage underlies many of the Shire's social issues.

At a Glance

Traditionally the Central Coast has had one of the lowest labour force participation rates (the proportion of people aged over 15 who are either working or looking for work) of all regions in NSW. In March 2010 the region's participation rate was 61.4% compared to the NSW rate of 63.0%.

The 2006 Census found that 41.1% of the Shire's total population was in the labour force.

In March 2010 the Shire's unemployment rate was 8.8%. This reflected an historical pattern of being 2-5% above the NSW (5.9% in March 2010) and Australian (5.6%) figures.

In addition, the Shire has a high ratio of part-time to full-time employment that could disguise significant levels of underemployment. The 2007 Quality of Life Survey found that 32.5% of the region's residents who worked part-time would like to work more hours.

Wyong Shire Labour Force 1991-2006

	1991	1996	2001	2006
Wyong Shire	38,791	45,350	52,487	58,662
Increase		6,559	7,137	6,175
% Increase		16.9%	15.7%	11.8%

Source: ABS Census

Central Coast Participation Rate

June 2006	June 2007	June 2008	June 2009	March 2010
63.2%	59.9%	58.6%	56.7%	61.4%

Source: DEEWR Australian Regional Labour Markets

Unemployment Rates 2006 -2010

	June 2006	June 2007	June 2008	June 2009	March 2010
Wyong Shire	8.3%	7.9%	7.6%	8.7%	8.8%
NSW	5.3%	5.1%	4.6%	5.7%	5.9%
Australia	5.1%	4.6%	4.2%	5.0%	5.6%

Source: DEEWR Small Area Labour Markets

The 2006 Census found that the majority of Wyong Shire's labour force (56.4%) worked in the occupations of tradespersons, labourers, clerical and sales workers. The most common occupation in the Shire was technicians and trade workers (17.1%). Between 1996 and 2006 there was an increase in the proportion of people employed as professionals (from 11.1% to 13.2%), however there remains an under representation in professional and managerial roles (23.3%) compared with Sydney and NSW.

Income levels within the Shire reflect its occupation profile. The 2006 Census found that weekly individual and household incomes in Wyong Shire were below the State average – with the median weekly individual income for persons aged 15 years and over in Wyong Shire being \$381, compared with \$461 for NSW and \$466 for Australia.

The 2006 Census found that the most significant industries employing Shire residents were retail trade (14.5%), health care and social assistance (11.7%), manufacturing (11.3%), and construction (10.5%).

This dependence on the construction, manufacturing and tourism sectors exposes the local economy to the cyclical variations in demand for those products and services.

Occupations of Employed Persons - 2006

	Wyong Shire	NSW
Managers	10.1%	13.6%
Professionals	13.2%	21.2%
Technicians & trades workers	17.1%	13.6%
Community & Personal Service workers	10.7%	8.6%
Clerical & Administrative workers	14.3%	15.4%
Sales workers	12.3%	9.7%
Machinery operators and drivers	7.9%	6.4%
Labourers	12.7%	9.5%
Other	1.7%	1.9%

Source: ABS 2006 Census



Median Weekly Individual Income 2001 - 2006

	2001	2006
Wyong	\$306	\$381
NSW	\$386	\$461

Source: ABS Census

Proportion of Wyong Shire's Working Residents Employed in the Central Coast Region

	2001	2006
1996	67.3%	67.3%
	68.4%	67.3%

Source: Journey to Work data derived from ABS Census

Industry of Employed Residents - 2006

Industry	Number	%
Retail trade	7,827	14.5%
Health care & social assistance	6,321	11.7%
Manufacturing	6,074	11.3%
Construction	5,651	10.5%
Accommodation & food services	3,962	7.4%
Education & Training	3,291	6.1%
Public administration & safety	3,218	6.0%
Transport, postal & warehousing	2,583	4.8%
Other services	2,167	4.0%
Professional, scientific & technical services	2,159	4.0%
Wholesale trade	2,066	3.8%
Administrative & support services	1,609	3.0%
Financial & insurance services	1,553	2.9%
Rental, hiring & real estate services	952	1.8%
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	845	1.6%
Information media & telecommunications	833	1.5%
Arts & recreation services	701	1.3%
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	435	0.8%
Mining	240	0.4%
Inadequately described/Not stated	1,368	2.5%
Total	53,855	100.0%

Source: ABS Census

During past decades, the growth in local employment opportunities has not kept pace with population increases in the Shire. Around one-third of the Shire's residents continue to commute beyond the Central Coast for employment (with the majority of these heading to Sydney). While the proportion of people commuting outside the region has remained stable, the numbers have increased by between 400-500 per year.

Current State

Rating	2009-2010
Employment & Income	Stable

The Current State is assessed as 'Stable' based on an analysis and extrapolation of historical trends, as follows:

- Participation Rate - generally stable (i.e. not getting better or worse compared to NSW and Australia)
- Unemployment Rate - stable (relative to NSW and Australia)
- Occupation Profile - moving towards the NSW profile
- Median Weekly Individual Income - increasing as a percentage of the NSW figure
- Commuting - stable as a proportion of the Shire's workforce

Key Drivers

At a macro level the key drivers of employment and incomes include:

- the economic cycle.
- interest rates.
- Inflation.
- the industrial relations system.
- taxation policy.
- economic development incentives.
- other government policies.

The supply of local jobs is driven by employment-generating development, which in turn is impacted by:

- land supply.
- planning controls and approval processes.
- adequacy of infrastructure (including water, waste, transport, telecommunications, education, cultural and recreational facilities, etc.).
- availability of a suitable labour supply.

Local income levels are driven by the:

- education and skill levels of the labour force, and
- the occupations and industries in which people are employed.

Response

The State Government's key planning document for the region is the Central Coast Regional Strategy (2008) and it aims to increase the region's employment supply by building the capacity for more than 45,000 new jobs on the Central Coast over the next 25 years. Of this target, 27,000 new jobs are proposed for Wyong Shire.

In February 2010 the NSW Government in partnership with Regional Development Australia, Gosford City and Wyong Shire Councils released the Central Coast Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy (REDES). This is a long-term plan for sustainable economic development on the Central Coast that was developed with key stakeholders, including businesses and individuals.

The Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy (REDES) is based around four key themes:

- Strengthening the regional economy.
- Developing future skills.
- Increasing knowledge and innovation.
- Infrastructure to support economic growth.

Regional Development Australia Central Coast will lead the implementation of the REDES through the Regional Compact for Economic Development and Employment – a cooperative agreement between the partners to implement the strategy and ensure a coordinated approach to sustainable economic development in the region.

Council adopted the Shire Strategic Vision in September 2009 and its priority objective to have "a strong sustainable business sector and increased local employment" is consistent with the aims of the REDES.

Council is also working to assist in providing a new skills centre that aims to reduce the region's high youth unemployment rates. Central Coast Group Training (CCGT) has announced they will develop a unique skills and business development centre in Wyong. CCGT has secured funding of \$2.7million from the Federal Government for the centre.

The pilot program aims to link small business with the Central Coast's youth. It is anticipated the centre will provide on-going employment opportunities for up to 120 new positions and accommodate approximately 30 new start-up businesses. The centre will accommodate a state-of-the-art hospitality training cafe, conference and training facilities, serviced offices, retail and trade training for a wide range of career opportunities.

Wyong Shire Council's response has also included:

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
2.1.1.1	Plan for release of employment generating lands within Precinct 7A (Warnervale Village).	Phase 1 of the rezoning process is complete and various studies and consultations have commenced to progress this project.

In addition, Council:

- Gives priority to the processing of employment-generating development applications. In 2009-10, 12 employment-generating development applications were processed in a median time of 17.5 working days. Based on applicants' estimates, these applications will generate 1,192 new full-time positions (excluding jobs in the construction phase).
- Is working with the State Government to release land in the Wyong Employment Zone to provide 6,000 jobs for the area.
- Is preparing a comprehensive Local Environmental Plan (LEP) that will identify land as future employment generating areas.
- Provides infrastructure (such as roads, waste collection, water and sewerage services) to support local economic development.
- Has a Business Expansion and Relocation Package and a business contact and assistance protocol to support local economic development.
- Supports town centre management organisations in The Entrance, Toukley and Wyong.
- Undertakes an Urban Improvement Program and Coastal Area Improvements to enhance the appearance of the Shire, encourage economic activity via tourism and to build community pride.
- Directly employs approximately 1,300 people in permanent full-time, part-time, temporary and casual positions.

Council also works with other regional agencies to support local businesses and encourage employment-generating development, including: Central Coast Business Enterprise Centre, the NSW Department of Industry and Investment, Premier's Department, NSW Department of Planning, Regional Development Australia Central Coast, AusIndustry, and Central Coast Tourism.

Some of the initiatives that these (and other) organisations are engaged in to improve employment and incomes in the region include: collaborating with local tertiary institutions; supporting start-up businesses; mentoring existing businesses; organising local business expos, networking and conferences; preparing submissions to State and Federal Government on infrastructure requirements; organising local events and bidding for major events to be held in the region; collecting regional economic data and information; and implementing the Regional Economic Development and Employment Strategy.



Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

Employment & Income

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Employment & Income	N/A	Stable	Stable	Stable

In order to make significant changes in the shire economic development is necessary to redress the existing backlog of local jobs (i.e. the shortfall in the number of employed Wyong Shire residents as a proportion of the working age population), as well as providing jobs for the growing population. Without major interventions in the short-medium term the Shire's unemployment rate will continue to trend above the state and national figures.

While education levels remain below average (the current low participation in post-school education means that the education gap is still widening), the Shire's workforce will continue to be over-represented in occupations that generally earn lower incomes and are susceptible to fluctuations in the economic cycle.

The ability of the Shire to attract investors in higher growth industries will depend, on the one hand, on its capacity to improve the level of education and skill of the labour force. And, on the other hand, to adapt its planning controls to facilitate new ways of working; improve its telecommunications infrastructure, and address the lack of cultural activities and facilities and the quality of local school and post-school education opportunities.

References

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- NSW Government, Central Coast Regional Strategy (2008).
- NSW Government, State Plan Delivery Update (2008.)



Governance

Good governance means that the structures, activities and operations of the organisations that govern the Shire are conducted in accordance with the principles of legal compliance, probity, transparency, accountability and respect for people across the community. Sound ethical principles such as honesty, fairness and respect are followed at all times.

At a Glance

Current State

Rating
Governance

2009-2010
Stable

Council has the following budget, population and staff numbers:

Budget and staff numbers 2006 -2010

Year	Budget	Population	Council Staff
2006-07	\$277,662,000	144,305	Full time 911 Casual 197
2007-08	\$343,542,000	147,234	Full time 878 Part time 58 Casual 241
2008-09	\$364,685,000	149,382	Full time 936 Part time 178 Casual 189
2009-10	\$403,841,000	150,000 (estimate, actual figure not available until April 2011)	Full time 932 Part time 187 Casual 181

* Source – ABS Cat. No 3218.0 Regional Population Growth Australia

Complaints can be directed to Council, the Division of Local Government (Department of Premier and Cabinet), formerly Department of Local Government, the Ombudsman and the Independent Commission Against Corruption. Whistleblower Legislation ensures that opportunity exists for Councillors, staff and the public to make disclosures concerning issues of concern without fear of repercussion.

Complaints to the Division of Local Government

	Total Rec'd	Wyong Council	Comment
2005-06	1,107	26	Preliminary enquiries into 4 matters, 3 related to pecuniary interest complaints
2006-07	1,225	53	26 related to caravan parks; Preliminary enquiries into four matters, one pecuniary interest complaint
2007-08	1,450	25	10 related to caravan parks; Preliminary enquiries into four matters
2008-09	1,208	23	10 on land use and planning matters; 8 on Council governance matters

Note: 2009-10 information not yet available.

Complaints to the Ombudsman

	Total Complaints	Declined After Initial Assessment	Preliminary or Informal Investigation	Formal Investigation
2005-06	11	5	6	0
2006-07	19	4	15	0
2007-08	7	3	4	0
2008-09	10	1	9	0

Note: 2009-10 information not yet available.

Complaints to the Independent Commission Against Corruption

In 2009-10 there were four matters which involved liaison with ICAC.

Specific DLG & DECCW Issues

The Deputy Director General (Local Government) of the Department of Premier and Cabinet advised Council in January 2010 that he had approved an investigation under Section 430 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) into Council's practices regarding the procurement and management of temporary professional services. Council subsequently received a Section 431 notice to produce evidence and documents to facilitate the investigation. Council has responded in full to the Section 431 notice. Council has also undertaken to fully cooperate with the DLG in any further aspects of the investigation process and currently awaits the outcome. Since joining Council in May 2010, the new General Manager, has taken corrective action to improve engagement practices and any remaining legacy non-complying contractual arrangements are expected to be resolved by November 2010.



In April 2010, The Environmental Protection Authority NSW (EPA) commenced 3 actions against Council in the Land and Environment Court. The actions related to the use of sites at Gwandalan, Toukley and Mardi for the purpose of waste facilities without lawful authority. Specifically it is alleged in all three actions that "Wyong Council committed an offence against s144(1) of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act) in that, it being the occupier of land, used the land as a waste facility without lawful authority". The General Manager met with representatives of the EPA in May 2010 with the objective of reaching an agreement which was acceptable to both parties. On balance, the negotiated agreement:

- minimised Council's costs.
- enables Council to work with DECCW in achieving improved environmental management practices.
- will see all fines awarded against Council directed to key environmental work within Wyong.
- the matter relating to Gwandalan was dropped.

Court cases arising from Council decisions/ actions/inactions

Land and Environment Court	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Successfully defended	12	4	4	2
Lost	3	3	2	-
Withdrawn	7	1	3	5
Mediated	4	2	1	7
Dismissed	1	3	5	1
Ongoing	6	9	4	4

Wyong Council

Councillors and staff must carry out their duties in accordance with a Code of Conduct.

Governance at Wyong Shire Council

Local government is run by democratically-elected Councillors who comprise the governing body of the Council. The role of the governing body is to direct and control the affairs of Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

As your Council, we are committed to managing the delivery of goods, services and facilities in a cost effective and efficient manner that is free of corruption, and with due regard for natural justice, procedural fairness and compliance with the law. This is done through a process of good governance. Good governance is characterised by participation, transparency, accountability,

compliance with the law and operational effectiveness, efficiency and equity. This supports the four Guiding Principles of our Shire Strategic Vision namely, that:

- government is conducted with openness and transparency involving the community in decisions that affect it,
- all three levels of government work closely together,
- there is environmental, social and economic sustainability, and
- there is fiscal responsibility.

Our Governance Structure

Below is a summary of some of the ways that good governance is implemented at Wyong:

- The Internal Ombudsman – acts as a trusted intermediary between Wyong Shire Council and an internal or external party, whilst representing the broad scope of community interests. The Internal Ombudsman fosters good practice in public administration to ensure that Council operates in a manner that is accountable, lawful, fair, impartial, transparent and responsive.
- Public Officer – has responsibility for helping people gain access to the public documents of Council and deals with requests from the public concerning the Council's affairs. The Public Officer is also responsible for ensuring we comply with the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA).
- Internal Audit – an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to help Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of Council's risk management, internal control and governance processes. Internal Audit activities are conducted in accordance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' International Professional Practices Framework and Code of Ethics.
- Governance Committee – an advisory Committee which meets quarterly comprising the Mayor, two Councillors and three independent members (one of whom is the Chair). The Committee provides oversight, challenge and recommendations on matters relating to governance, risk management and the overall control environment within Council.
- Charters, Policies, Procedures and Protocols – the key documents relating to our governance framework are the Code of Conduct and the Code of Meeting Practice. The Code of Conduct exists to help staff and Councillors understand the standards of conduct that are expected of them, enable them to fulfil their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence and to act in a way that enhances public confidence in the integrity of local government. The Code of Meeting Practice sets down protocols governing how Council and Committee meetings should operate.
- The business of the Council is carried out in accordance with Council policies. 51 policies are in place to ensure a consistent approach. Twelve of these have been added in the last 12 months being; B1 Bonding of Development Works, C6 Controls for Site Waste Management, F6 Operation of

Temporary Food Premises, H1 Hoardings, I2 Investment Policy, L4 Local Approvals, M1 Management of Feral Animals, P3 Planning Agreements Policy, P4 Probity Policy, P5 Policy for the Establishment of Policies, S3 Grants Sponsorship Policy (outward), S4 Grants Sponsorship Policy (Inward).

- Enterprise Risk Management – Council has in place various processes to identify, assess, manage and report on risks and opportunities that might impact on the achievement of our objectives. These include:
 - o corporate risks, captured through the Corporate Risk Register,
 - o operational risks and controls, captured in Operational Plans and through the Management Self Assessment process,
 - o generic, organisational controls, captured in the Management Self Assessment process,
 - o project risks, captured through the project management system,
 - o contract risks, captured through the contract management system,
 - o asset risks, captured in the asset management system, and
 - o insured risks and Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) risks.

Council is a self insurer for Workers Compensation and is audited to ensure that status can be retained. A WorkCover audit was completed in October 2007. Council passed the audit. There were fifteen non compliance reports. Of the fifteen reports, four were management responsibilities; six were risk management, three where OH&S procedures and two were training requirements. Council's next WorkCover audit will take place in January 2011.

The Division of Local Government (Department of Premier & Cabinet)

The Division of Local Government (Department of Premier & Cabinet) monitors NSW local Councils to ensure they are operating efficiently. This is done in a number of ways, including conducting reviews of Councils under the Promoting Better Practice Program. Wyong Shire Council's last review was carried out in 2005, covering governance, planning and other regulatory functions, asset and financial management, community and consultation, workforce relations. There were 22 recommendations arising from this review and all have been addressed.

Community Engagement

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 requires Council to make a range of information available to the public; either on Council's website; or via inspection, free of charge. The information ranges from information about Council; such as business papers, minutes of Council meetings; policy documents and the various Codes applicable to Council; to information about development applications; and other local orders and approvals. Other information about Council's business can be

obtained through application to Council; either on a formal or informal basis.

The community can have its say about Council's proposals through many avenues. These include:

- attending Council meetings.
- speaking at Residents' Forum which is held prior to each Ordinary Council Meeting (if required).
- responding to advertisements concerning development applications.
- responding to notifications to adjoining residents concerning development applications.
- participating in public forums for major projects such as the Annual Plan and Town Centre Strategies.
- responding to surveys.
- participating in Council committees and the Youth and Seniors Councils.
- keeping in touch with Council via social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.
- contacting Councillors.
- voting in elections, referendums or polls.
- running for election as a local government councillor.

The public is also able to be involved in a number of community and Council organisations throughout the Shire which provide advocacy, representation and engagement with Council on issues of concern. They include:

Precinct Committees	11
Progress Associations	9
Resident Associations	1
Chambers of Commerce	3

The community is also encouraged to become members of 355 Committees which are delegated care, control and management of Council facilities such as local halls and parks. There are 35 throughout the Shire made up of:

Halls and community centres	28	Tennis facilities	2
Historic site	1	Public Reserve	1
Senior Citizens Centre	1	Art and tourist Info Centre	1
Retirement Village	1		



Central Coast Regional groups:

- Central Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (CCROC).
- Gosford-Wyong Councils' Water Authority (GWCWA).
- Central Coast Tourism Inc (CCTI).
- Central Coast Business Enterprise Centre.
- Hunter/Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy Committee.
- Central Coast Regional Coordination Management Group.
- Central Coast Area Assistance Scheme Regional Committee.
- Central Coast Area Assistance Scheme Local Ranking Committee.
- Local Emergency Management Committee.
- Bush Fire Management Committee.
- Fire Control District Liaison Committee.

Governing Strategies for the Shire:

- Shire Strategic Vision – is the community's long-term vision for the future of the Shire: *'creating our ideal community – caring, prosperous and sustainable'*. It was adopted by Council in September 2009 and is based on four underlying principles: community involvement, co-operation between levels of government, sustainability and fiscal responsibility.
- **State Plan** - produced by a process that engaged the whole of Government, the community, Local Government, industry and stakeholder groups led by the Premier's Department. The plan set priorities for the State Government with targets to guide decision making and resource allocation. It sets out delivery plans for implementation.
- **Central Coast Regional Strategy (CCRS)** – released in 2008, the CCRS aims to protect the environment and deliver jobs closer to home for Central Coast residents. It outlines a sustainable approach to the region's forecast population growth. It strongly promotes the area's key centres of Gosford and Tuggerah-Wyong, complementing the existing Gosford City Centre Plan and plans for the new Warnervale Town Centre.

Key Drivers

- changing community attitudes,
- increased use of technology as a form of communication,
- new legislation and regulations,
- more media exposure on matters concerning Council,
- ageing workforce,
- turnover of Councillors at each Local Government election,
- changes in the structure of State and Federal agencies,
- continued population growth, and
- higher levels of education and income.

Response

Ref	2009-10 Strategic Program	Progress
5.2.1.1	Develop a Long-Term Financial Strategy to underpin the Shire Strategic Vision and asset management strategies.	As part of the development of Council's Delivery Program and 2010-11 Annual Plan five Service Review Workshops were held during the second quarter of 2009 and as a result, a Priority List of programs and projects was determined. In early 2010 Council's Strategic Finance Committee had its first meeting to review financial objectives and policies to be included in the Long-Term Financial Strategy. In February 2010 Council resolved to be in Group 2 for phasing in the new planning and reporting legislation. Group 2 Councils are to adopt Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Resourcing Strategy by 30 June 2011.
5.3.1.1	Maintain the percentage of customer service requests responded to within the agreed timeframe at 85%.	Considerable effort was invested across the organisation to ensure that this target was achieved during 2009-10. Snapshots taken at the end of each quarter showed that the 85% target was achieved.
5.3.2.1	Develop an Information Management Strategic Plan.	The Information Management (IM) Strategic Plan Framework completed was completed during 2009-10. The Strategic Plan will be completed in 2010-11.
5.4.1.1	Finalise and implement a Sustainability Decision Making Framework for the organisation.	Actions from the Sustainability Decision Making Framework continue to be rolled out. Pilot Initiatives for implementing sustainability into work practice are being developed and will be trialled in 2010-11. A new Sustainability Officer was engaged and began to implement sustainability education initiatives under a Community Environmental Education (CEE) Grant project that will continue into 2010-11.
5.4.2.1	Develop and implement Stage I of the culture change project to deliver improved environmental outcomes in all operational activities.	A program that integrated the Culture Change Program with the broader overarching Human Resources Strategy was implemented during 2009-10. Completed initiatives that came out of this program include environmental awareness training, development of a communications framework and leadership and supervisor development/training. The process is now one of continuous improvement and ongoing monitoring. Council's Environmental Management System is under development and on track for completion in late 2010.



Council also responds to governance matters through:

- complaints handling procedure.
- audits of accounts of 355 Committees and the like.
- staff and Councillors attend Precinct Committee meetings when requested.
- training staff across Council in a variety of governance related matters.
- committee training for the community.
- preparing a variety of strategies, policies and plans that respond to State and Federal legislation and direction.
- appointment of an Internal Ombudsman.

In recent years there has been an increasing emphasis on sound governance procedures becoming more transparent in the eyes of the community in addition to facilitating sound decision making.

As a community service organisation it is anticipated that Council will continue to play an increasing role in the provision and coordination of services provided by all levels of government. In particular local government expects to play a more significant role in representing local community sentiment in relation to government policy decisions.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Governance	N/A	Stable	Stable	Stable

References

- Code of Conduct
- Code of Meeting Practice
- Facilities and Expenses Policy for Councillors
- Governance Committee Charter





Telecommunications

Telecommunications plays a key role in our day to day activities as it allows us access to jobs, education, markets, leisure and other services.

At a Glance

Wyong Shire is serviced by several telecommunications companies. The principal provider is Telstra. Secondary providers include, Optus, 3 Mobile and Virgin 3G and GSM. The services provided include the 3G and GSM networks. They also include wireless and fixed line broadband internet, and Pay TV.

Telstra recently switched off their CDMA network in favour of their Next G networks.

Currently all coastal and major towns of the Shire receive Voice, picture, TV, Video and broadband coverage on the Next G and 3G networks from the carriers. Yarralong and parts of Dooralong require an external antenna or only receive mobile satellite service. There is no Next G or 3G coverage in the rural areas of the Shire. GSM is available to most coastal and major towns. 3 mobile provide talk and messaging coverage.

Most of the Shire's telephone exchanges are enabled for ADSL broadband and High-speed broadband, including Gwandalan, Yarralong and Gorokan exchanges. The service capacity is still dependant on distance from the exchange and quality of the phone line. There are some ADSL black spots in the shire. Speeds are constrained by the extent of copper wire delivery systems.

Current State

Rating	2009-2010
Telecommunications	Stable

Some wireless broadband providers are planning to expand their services to include the Central Coast region. Telstra and the other main providers are planning on continuing to utilise their Next G and 3G networks and are attempting to provide faster and more reliable services.

The future will see an increase in the coverage of the Next G and 3G networks, which will lead to an increase in the functionality and practicality of using mobile phones for internet and work purposes. With a greater coverage accessing the internet and emails will be much more convenient and theoretically should lead to greater job efficiency. The availability of high speed broadband should increase and be utilised by more of the population making it easier and faster to access things such as email.

Future Trends

Predicted trend for the future - based on the key drivers and the response undertaken during:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Telecommunications	N/A	N/A	N/A	Stable

Work is continuing with Regional Development Australia on the further improvement in priority position of the Central Coast and Hunter Region Broadband Project. A project has been initiated to clearly demonstrate the current quality of telecommunications infrastructure within the Wyong Shire. This will be utilised to improve our rollout priority.

Work has commenced to understand the impacts of physical rollout of fibre infrastructure. Relationships continue to be developed with local businesses in support of the National Broadband initiative.





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